Comelec infighting threatens election cases

STORY ON PAGE A2

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BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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AT A GLANCE

- By not entering a plea and petitioning for bail, Estrada shows he does not recognize court's jurisdiction
- Defense wants clarification of laws he allegedly violated
- Court says accused must be addressed as Mr. President during trial
- He was escorted by longest, most expensive police convoy
- Sandiganbayan was secured for P455 thousand

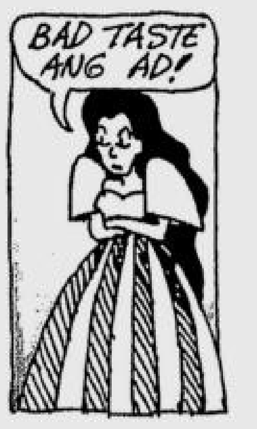
Much ado over tissue

By V. Cabreza
PDI N. Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Given the realities in the countryside, it's a case of much ado over (basically) nothing.

The flap over a

MUCH/ A16


BAD TASTE ANG AD!

Defense: We are not ready, Your Honor'

By Cathy C. Yamsuan

"WE are not ready for the arraignment, Your Honor," lawyer Rene Saguisag told Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice Francis Garchitorena yesterday, as he argued in vain for 30 minutes to delay ex-President Joseph Estrada's perjury arraignment.

During the hearing preceding the arraignment, Estrada's lawyers sought a postponement of several days, saying they wanted to see all the evidence supporting the perjury charge as well as a clarification of what laws the former President is accused of violating.

The defense team unveiled its strategy by instructing Estrada to not enter a plea of either guilty or not guilty, apparently to show that he does not recognize the jurisdiction of the court.

In an arraignment—the first act of the accused before the court—the accused tells the court whether he believes he is guilty or not of the offense with which he has been charged.

By not petitioning for bail, Estrada also showed that he did not recognize the authority of the anti-graft court, according to legal experts interviewed by the INQUIRER.

Saguisag argued earlier yesterday that the former leader should not be tried for perjury because that allegation would be covered by the charge of economic plunder he is to face later.

Garchitorena disagreed, saying Estrada must stand trial on both counts.

Defense lawyers have indicated that they plan to question the constitutionality of Estrada's separate plunder case before the Supreme Court.

If Estrada's lawyers had successfully linked the perjury charge to the plunder charge, the perjury proceedings would have become de-

WE/ A16

Estrada arraigned: historic but routine

Court not convinced to integrate perjury, plunder cases

"HISTORIC first step to freedom," for ex-President Estrada, so his lawyers claim at his arraignment at the Sandiganbayan on Wednesday afternoon. His wife, Senator-elect Dr. Loi Ejercito-Estrada, and his lawyer Jose Flaminiano (center) lead a pack of morale boosters.

THE MOMENT was historic on one hand and routine on the other as Joseph Estrada yesterday became the first former Philippine president to be arraigned on criminal charges.

"Mr. President, will you please come forward?" Sandiganbayan Justice Francis Garchitorena said—and in just over a half-hour, the court proceeding that the government had warned could spark bloody demonstrations was over.

Just as the supposed destabilization attempts and assassination tries had failed to materialize, so had the drama.

With last-minute defense efforts failing to delay his arraignment on a perjury charge, Estrada stood up in the packed courtroom yesterday afternoon, forced to go through the routine motions of any criminal defendant.

"Mr. President, just for the record, how old are you?" the judge asked.

"I'm 64 years old, Your Honor," said Estrada, wearing a light cream barong, brown pants, and his white wristband with the presidential seal.

He was then asked if his surname had been changed from Ejercito, as he was born, to Estrada, which he used during his successful acting career.

"I had it legalized when I ran for mayor," said the former mayor of San Juan.

Then came the key question: How did he plead to the charge of perjury?

"Your Honor, I will follow the advice of my lawyers," Estrada said.

"You will not enter a plea?" asked Garchitorena, who alternately referred to Estrada as "the accused" or "Mr. President."

Estrada nodded in acknowledgment, then returned to his seat.

The court entered a plea of not guilty on his behalf and Garchitorena set a pre-trial hearing for Aug. 2.

The accused ex-President will next appear in the anti-graft court on July 10 to be arraigned on the more serious charge of plunder, which carries the death sentence. The perjury charge carries a maximum sentence of six years in jail.

Yesterday's unprecedented arraignment was delayed 30 minutes as Estrada lawyer Rene Saguisag argued in vain for the hearing to be postponed. *(See related story.)*

Saguisag told reporters outside the court that the judge's decision was "nothing to get excited about." Special prosecutor Leonardo Tamayo said it was automatic in the Philippines to treat a

ESTRADA/ A16

Millionaires club in government listed

By Juliet L. Javellana, Clarissa S. Batino and Andrea Trinidad-Echavez

THE CHAIR of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) officially receives a total of P10,936,272 in annual salary and other compensation and benefits, making her the highest paid government employee.

The PCSO is chaired by Honeygirl de Leon, who was appointed to the post on Feb. 5 this year. She is the sister of Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit' Singson.

De Leon denied she had been receiving P11 million a year.

The president of the Government Service Insurance System's annual income is P6,511,087 but has the highest basic pay in the entire government at P4,283,748.

President Macapagal-Arroyo's annual basic pay of P660,000 pales in comparison.

The PCSO general manager has an annual salary and benefits amounting to P10.4 million, the head of the Philippine National Oil Co.'s Energy Development Corp. gets P7.3 million; the Social Security System executive vice president gets P4.9 million and the GSIS EVP gets P5.8 million.

These are examples of what Malacañang described as the "atrocious" salaries of top officials of 14 government-owned and controlled corporations and government financial institutions, which were found to have excessive salaries and benefits for senior officials.

On Monday, Ms Macapagal ordered the suspension of the increases in benefits

MILLIONAIRES/ A16

AFP sees 'decisive battle' vs Abus in next few days

By Carlito Pablo, Alexander Young and Julie Alipala-Inot

THE CRISIS sparked by the Abu Sayyaf's taking of hostages at the Dos Palmas Resort in Palawan may have passed the one-month mark yesterday, but the Armed Forces is confident of ending it "in the next few days."

Despite criticisms that the military had been bungling the pursuit-and-rescue operations in Basilan, AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan told reporters at yesterday's briefing: "We're doing fine. We're looking forward to a decisive battle in the next few days."

Adan's optimism appeared to stem from what he reported as a series of armed engagements that started Tuesday afternoon at the Sampinit Complex, a dense jungle area at the boundaries of the towns of Sumisip, Tipo-Tipo and Maluso and the capital, Isabela City.

Two other clashes occurred in the area at dusk and late at night, Adan said.

In Zamboanga City, Col. Danilo Servando,

AFP/ A16

Waste incinerators shrinking testicles, says Belgian study

By Andrea Echavez

PEOPLE resorting to burning their garbage, take note.

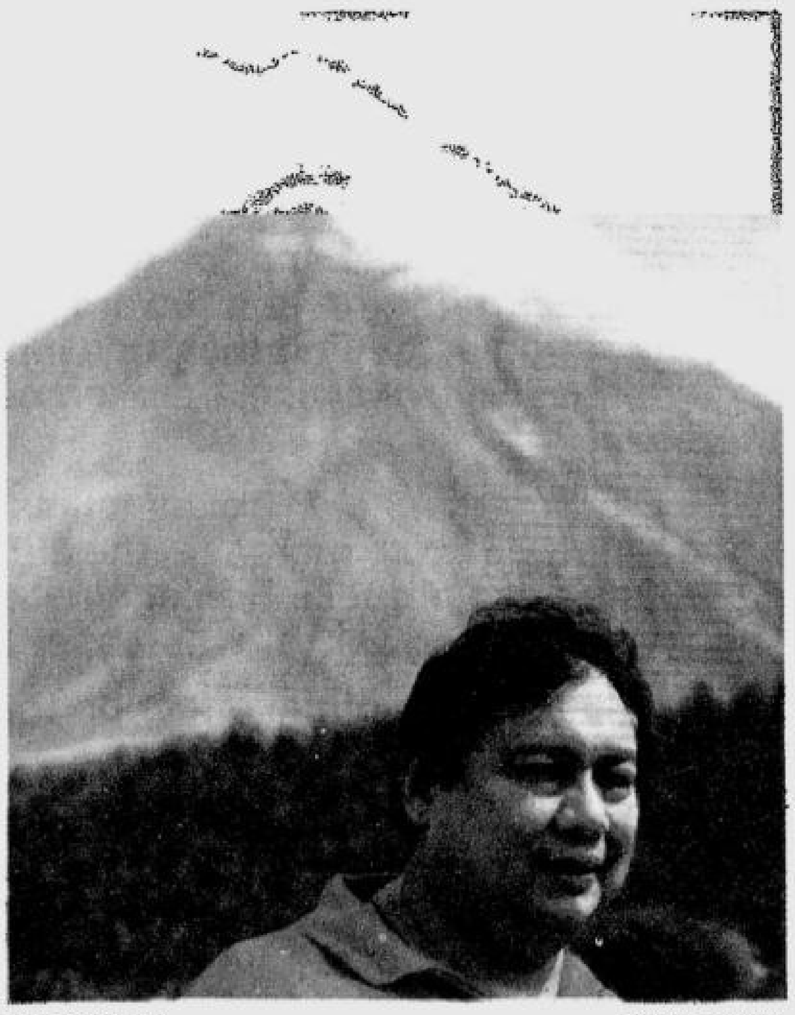
A recent study in Belgium revealed that children who lived near waste incinerators matured sexually at an older age compared to others. Male teenagers had smaller testicles and female teenagers had smaller breasts.

Results of the study were published recently in the medical journal The Lancet.

The study involved 200 17-year-old males and females from the suburbs of Hoboken and Wilrikj, which are polluted by lead smelter and waste incinerators, and from Peer, which is a rural area far from smelters and chemical plants.

Concentrations of the environmental pollutants lead and cadmium in blood, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and dioxin-like compounds in serum samples and metabolites of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in urine were higher among those living near incinerators than those in Peer.

WASTE/ A4



BLOWOUT

EDWIN BACASMAS

While Mayon is blowing its top, Mike Arroyo arrives at the Legazpi City airport to celebrate his 55th birthday at the evacuation centers.

Mudflow alert up; Mike vows aid for baby

By Rey Nasol
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LEGAZPI CITY—The eruption of Mayon Volcano has become a blessing in disguise for a 4-month-old evacuee suffering from a deformed lower extremity.

Alaiza Nuñez will finally get medical attention.

Thanks to First Gentleman Mike Arroyo who visited on his 55th birthday yesterday several evacuation centers here, including the Gogon Elementary School where he saw Alaiza.

Arroyo brought truckloads of foodstuff and two medical teams from the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office.

"We came here to avoid the dangers of the eruption, but I am very happy that my daughter will get medical assistance from our government in a very special way," Alaiza's mother Gina, 25, said as she shed tears of joy.

The heartwarming story came as the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) warned that mudflow could sweep through populated areas.

Even before Phivolcs issued the warning, thousands of residents in the low-lying areas around the volcano had expressed fears that lahar might no longer flow into the Bonga Gully and other major river channels on the slopes of

MUDFLOW/ A4

BAKA MATATAGALAN NGA!

Second FRONT PAGE

CANVASSING OF VOTES, TOO

Comelec infighting threatens poll cases

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

THE SQUABBLE at the Commission on Elections is threatening to further delay electoral procedures long after the May 14 polls.

Militant party-list groups yesterday expressed apprehension the leadership crisis at the Comelec would hamstring the disqualification cases they had filed before the Supreme Court.

The high tribunal had remanded the cases back to the Comelec for "summary evidentiary hearings" but the squabble at the poll body has threatened to drag the cases.

Neri Javier Colmenares, lawyer of party-list election winner Bayan Muna, said that while the group felt vindicated by the SC's decision limiting the party-list system to marginalized and underrepresented sectors, they were bothered by the worsening factionalism at the Comelec.

"We are worried that the Comelec may not immediately act on the matter," Colmenares said. "They (commissioners) are busy bickering rather than seeing to the urgent issues before it such as our petition and the completion of the canvassing of votes."

Colmenares said the party-list issue might face the same fate as the senatorial canvassing of votes which has not been completed more than one month after the elections.

The opposition Puwersa ng Masa on Tuesday asked the Comelec en banc to resolve immediately four petitions contesting 180,000 votes for Sen. Ralph Recto and come up with a final tally before June 30.

The Supreme Court had earlier barred the Comelec from proclaiming any winners in the party-list elections, but instead ordered the poll body to conduct "summary evidentiary hearings" on the qualifications of the 154 party-list participants based on guidelines that the SC had set down.

The high tribunal, in a 43-page decision, said only party-list groups representing marginalized sectors and organizations not funded by the government were qualified.

The SC did not single out any group as unqualified but left it to the Comelec to decide. It also ordered the Comelec to submit its compliance report "within 30 days."

The Comelec en banc is set to tackle the SC decision in its regular Thursday meeting today.

The seven-member body, however, is itself divided over who will preside over the meetings, after four of the commissioners defied Comelec chair Alfredo Benipayo's order naming two officers in charge in his absence.

Instead, the four commissioners named one of their group as the acting chair. Comelec employees then complained they did not know which of the commissioners to follow.

Colmenares said the Comelec should act with dispatch on the petition for disqualification filed by Bayan Muna and Bagong Bayani-OFW Labor Party against 17 party list groups so it could beat the 30-day deadline.

Colmenares reminded the Comelec that the terms of office of party-list representatives in the House will start on June 30.

"The Comelec in the first place could have earlier ruled which party-list groups were qualified to run in the elections," Colmenares said, referring to the petition filed by Bayan Muna against Mamamayan Ayaw sa Droga and 16 other group weeks before the elections.

CONSUMER & OIL PRICE WATCH
-Private Sector-

MORE TRANSPARENCY IN OIL PRICING

Every time the oil companies increase or decrease the price of oil, the same cycle of events is repeated. Demonstrations happen, various groups questioning the reasonableness of the price increase or decrease clamor for transport and wage increases, then, the Government intervenes.

Recent developments in the energy and gasoline crisis in California clearly demonstrate that effective deregulation can only happen when there is a clear, transparent and easily understood method of determining increases and decreases in the prices of energy and refined oil products.

USE "DIRECT COST RECOVERY PRINCIPLE" AS BASIS FOR OIL PRICING

In a deregulated environment, there is a need for greater transparency in oil pricing. This means adhering strictly to a "direct cost recovery principle" as the basis of monthly increases or decreases in the prices of petroleum products.

Direct cost recovery simply means getting the actual increase or decrease in the price of crude oil and adding the depreciation or appreciation of the peso-dollar rate of the previous month over the current month. Using the DOE formula, the price increase or decrease is made for the following month.

PROACTIVE MEASURES

1. We met with the three oil companies and will soon meet with Energy Secretary Vincent Perez, to establish consensus on the following:
   a. Use of crude price as the basis of oil price increases or decreases since 90% of our requirements for local gasoline and refined products come from local oil refineries which use crude.
   b. The Singapore (MOPS) should not be used as the formula for pricing as it is based on imported diesel and gasoline prices in Singapore which are normally priced higher and subject to greater price fluctuation than locally refined products.

   Using the direct cost recovery principle and the two guidelines will be a step in the right direction toward making the public understand the rationale behind the price increase or decrease. These guidelines will, likewise, help temper the forthcoming price increase.
2. We will, also, meet with DTI Secretary Mar Roxas to assess the impact of the forthcoming oil price increase, the 20% hike in domestic cargo rates, the peso depreciation against the US dollar, and the planned water and power rate increases.

Hopefully, these increases will have a minimal effect on the prices of basic commodities.

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Macapagal backs away from coup talk

By Christine Avendaño and Andrea T. Echavez

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday said the people behind the latest destabilization plot against her government have not been able to muster enough support for their cause.

In an interview with CNN, the President said reports of a new attempt to overthrow her administration were "(only) in the minds of some ambitious persons."

"I don't know if you can call it a plot . . . something that is quite organized. I don't think it was able to get to that level of organization," Ms Macapagal said.

"I just know for a fact, from people who had been sounded out, that the previous administration would like to make a comeback if it could. But from what I can see, they've been even less successful in their suasion now than during the elections," the President said.

Ms Macapagal stepped back from claims a coup plot was under way, describing the reports as exaggerated, after deposed president Joseph Estrada appeared in court without incident yesterday.

Security forces were put on high alert after Ms Macapagal announced on Friday the discovery of a supposed plot to destabilize the government with mass protests to coincide with Estrada's arraignment on perjury charges Wednesday.

But only a handful of pro- and anti-Estrada demonstrators stood outside the Sandiganbayan where Estrada refused to plead to a perjury charge, the first of three corruption charges against him.

Militant groups, however, criticized the Macapagal administration for its "publicity blitzkrieg" over the alleged coup plot, describing the administration as its own "destabilizer."

"We cannot blame some quarters for calling this administration paranoid. The way the Palace reacted to the reports was beyond rationality," the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas and Pamalakaya said in a joint statement.

KMP chair Rafael Mariano scored the President for "saturating the public" with "spectacular tales" of coup attempts against her administration.

He said the "much talked about coup attempt" against the government forced the Sandiganbayan to reset Estrada's arraignment on plunder charges to July 10.

Pamalakaya chair Rodolfo Sambajon said the government should not have made a big fuss about the issue and instead should have identified the coup plotters and charged them in court.

He said the hype about the alleged coup plot helped the government escape having to explain why it failed to proceed with a speedy Estrada trial.

But administration Sen. Robert Barbers yesterday claimed he has received "raw information" about the plot to topple the Macapagal administration.

In a news briefing at his Makati home, the chair of the Senate committee on public order said some of the persons behind the latest plot were also behind the "Edsa III" demonstrations in April.

According to Barbers, people with links to Estrada have been going to government, military and police offices to try and convince officials to withdraw their support from Ms Macapagal.

"These are officials who are disgruntled with this administration," he said. *With Armand N. Nocum, Rocky Nazareno and an AFP report*

Imelda seeks permit to travel

By Rocky Nazareno

FORMER first lady Imelda Marcos has asked the Supreme Court to allow her to go on a 45-day trip to the United States, France and Saudi Arabia, ostensibly to seek "skull trauma therapy."

Marcos intends to travel from June 29 to Aug. 12, to consult with three foreign specialists for treatment of the "skull trauma" she supposedly suffered last year, according to her petition to the SC 1st Division, which is hearing a graft case against her.

"It is important that she leave immediately to avoid a stroke or any complications," Dr. Roberto Anastacio, her attending physician at the University of Sto. Tomas Hospital, attested to in a medical certificate.

Last December, Marcos underwent an operation to remove a blood clot in her head. She had slipped and hit her head on the floor of her San Juan residence a month earlier.

Anastacio said Marcos still needed to go through more post-operative procedures to determine whether blood circulation in her brain has returned to normal.

He said Marcos needed to undergo a "Positron Emission Tomography" which he said was "not available in local hospitals."

In her petition, Marcos said she would be consulting with Dr. Stephan Meyer of the Presbyterian Columbian Neurologic Institute in New York and Dr. Coleman Ryan of the Columbia Medical Center.

She said at least 25 days would be needed for the US phase of the treatment.

From the US, Marcos said she will go to France where she intends to spend 10 days seeking the medical opinion of Dr. Jean Leon Guermonprez of the Hospital Broussals.

The last 10 days of Marcos' foreign trip will be spent in Saudi Arabia where she will "undergo further alternative medical evaluation and treatment."

Fleeing abuse, 80 Filipinas run into rats

EIGHTY Filipinas, mostly domestic helpers who ran away from their abusive employers, are languishing in a rat-infested detention center in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

The Department of Foreign Affairs, on being apprised of the situation, asked the Saudi Arabian government to facilitate the repatriation of the Filipinas or, at the very least, improve conditions at the detention center.

The DFA received a video clip that showed rats as big as cats scurrying around the room where the Filipinas were being held.

It was also learned that the detainees were only being fed rice and soy sauce for their meals.

The DFA also received reports some of the women had been sexually abused by Saudi jail authorities.

Rocky Nazareno

3 hurt in shooting at IBP exec's home

COTABATO CITY—Heavily armed men last Tuesday night fired their guns outside the residence of lawyer Cynthia Guiani-Sayadi, president of the local Integrated Bar of the Philippines chapter, leaving three persons wounded.

Supt. Romeo Almacha, Cotabato City police director, said the incident appeared to be election-related.

Sayadi is a daughter of former Comelec commissioner Japal Guiani Sr., who ran for Congress in Maguindanao's second district in the last elections. She is also the lawyer of some politicians in Maguindanao.

Sayadi was in Manila when the attack occurred. Her husband, Omar, blamed it on relatives "who are on the other side of the political fence."

This was the second time Sayadis' house came under siege. Earlier, a grenade was fired at the home, followed by gunfire.

"We had received reports that my house would be shot up. I never thought it would come to this," Omar said.

Hurt in the attack was one of the Sayadis' security guards identified as Sammy Namag. The other victims who were hit by stray bullets were identified as Carol Yanok and Sammy Ibrahim.

Police probers said that shortly before the incident, Warto Midtimbang, son of Mayor Udzag Midtimbang of Talayan, Maguindanao, arrived at the Sayadi home in a Nissan Terrano.

Almacha said Namag opened the gate, thinking he was a visitor, and was met with a volley of gunfire.

For his part, Midtimbang said he was passing by the Sayadi residence when the guard shot at him, forcing him to fight back. *Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

‘Pray, repent,’ Chavit advises Erap

By Jerry Esplanada and Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

“PRAY. Repent. Seek the nation’s forgiveness. Get rid of your so-called friends and advisers.”

The unsolicited advice, intended for disgraced ex-President Joseph Estrada, came from his former buddy and main accuser—outgoing Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis “Chavit” Singson.

“He should pray, do a little introspection. He needs to know himself,” Singson said earlier yesterday, hours before Estrada was arraigned before the Sandiganbayan on a charge of perjury.

Singson doubted, however, if prayers would help Estrada, whom he called “one of the worst persons I have ever met.”

In a related development, Singson’s lawyer has assured that his client was ready to testify in Estrada’s trial for plunder in July, noting that he was still cloaked with the immunity from prosecution granted by the impeachment court last December.

Lawyer Pablito Sanidad also clarified a 12-page motion that Singson filed last Monday asking the Sandiganbayan to qualify the nature of his testimony before he submits to a subpoena that would require him to appear at Estrada’s criminal trial.

Sanidad said the media had misinterpreted the motion as a formal refusal to testify.

“This motion simply intends to understand the nature of his testimony. He will not open himself to incrimination. All he wants is to be advised how the court views his testimony because he will still testify,” said Sanidad.

Charge Chavit, too

Estrada’s lawyers have asked the Sandiganbayan to also charge Singson, the prime state witness against Estrada during the aborted impeachment trial, as an accomplice in the same cases.

The anti-graft court did not act on the petition, although it has subpoenaed Singson for the trial.

The plunder trial itself has been rescheduled for July 10.

Sanidad, former chair of the Free Legal Assistance Group who was the lead private prosecutor at the impeachment trial, said Singson’s immunity was indisputable.

“The defense lawyers are probably not aware that Singson’s immunity goes back to the impeachment trial. Few lawyers realize that the impeachment court granted Singson his immunity when he was first presented as a witness on Dec. 19 last year,” he said.

The impeachment trial transcripts show that Sanidad had sought immunity for Singson during the session’s oral introduction when Singson was presented as a star witness on the issue of Estrada’s allegedly having received kickbacks from tobacco excise taxes.

Immunity

Sanidad, quoting from the transcripts, told the impeachment court that he was presenting Singson as a witness “to show that by the nature of his testimony, he is under the coverage of Presidential Decree No. 749.”

The decree, signed by the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos in 1975, grants immunity to “givers of bribes… and to their accomplices in bribery and other graft cases against public officers.”

Subsequent rules regulating the issuance of immunity are more stringent compared to the old Marcos decree, but it was never repealed, Sanidad said.

Estrada’s lawyers did not contest Sanidad when he cited the decree.

The immunity also protects witnesses, who may turn out to have been accomplices to the crime.

But the immunity only covers criminal prosecution.

Sanidad said the same immunity would not protect Singson from a civil suit.

Singson will also lose his immunity if his testimony were to be proven “false and malicious or made only for the purpose of harassing, molesting or in any way prejudicing the public officer denounced.”

Course of justice

Singson, who has dominated Ilocos Sur politics for almost 30 years, said he was “very sure that… justice will take its course” in the Estrada cases.

He said the cases against Estrada should be resolved quickly “because there won’t be peace in this country” until they are resolved.

He said it was unfortunate that “some people in this country are still misinformed” about the charges against Estrada.

“They are not aware of the seriousness of the charges against him. The SSS and the GSIS lost billions. I’m surprised some people still don’t understand,” Singson said.

Singson’s allegation that Estrada received more than P500 million in illegal gambling payoffs and tobacco tax bribes led to the impeachment of the movie star-turned-president.

In December, Estrada asked the 22 senators sitting as jurors in the impeachment case against him for a “judgment of acquittal.”

Nation divided

He did not answer the charges of bribery, corruption, betrayal of public trust and culpable violation of the Constitution but merely issued a blanket denial of the four impeachable offenses.

Singson said that by “friends and advisers” around Estrada, he was also referring to certain politicians.

He did not name names but said “they’re the reason the nation is divided.”

According to Singson, he and Estrada were friends for a long time but he does not consider the jailed ex-president a friend anymore.

“I never abandoned him but he did not prove to be a real and good friend. He used me, insulted me and tried to have me killed… He is one of the worst persons I have ever met. Will you trust somebody like him? I don’t think so,” he said.

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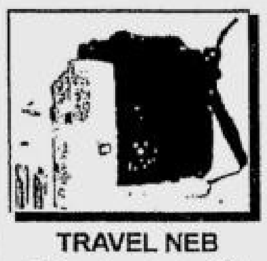
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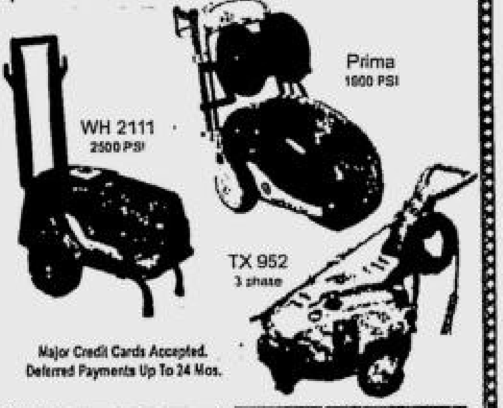
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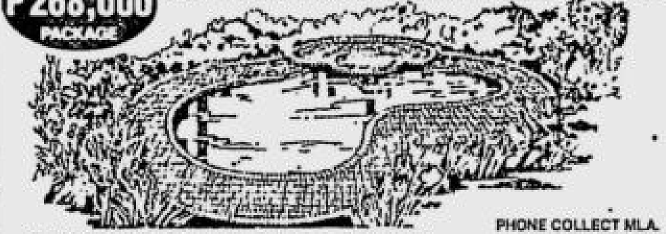
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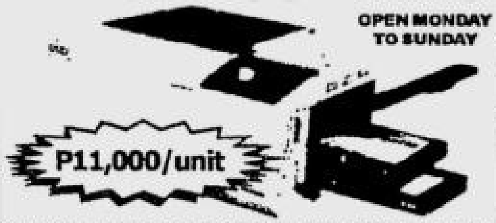
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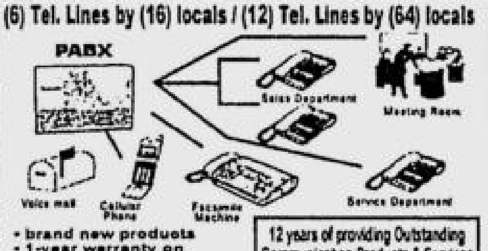

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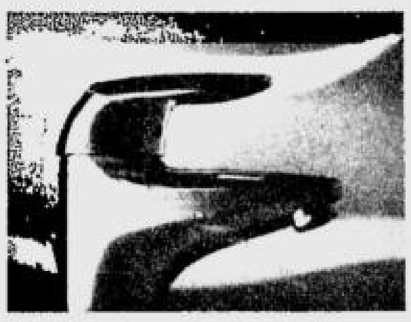
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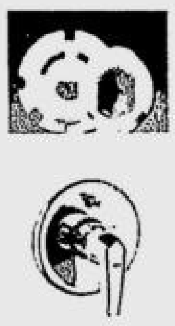
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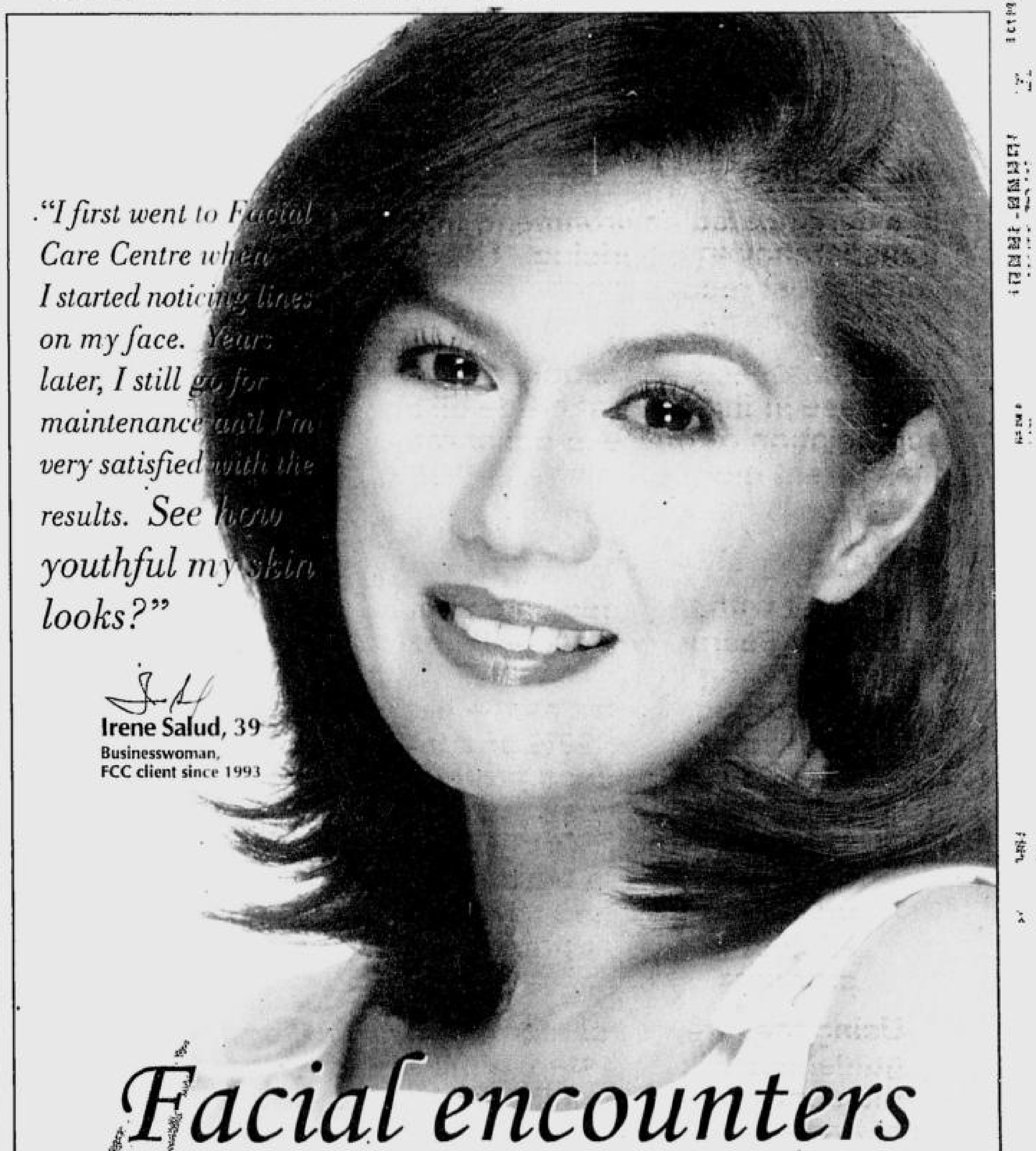
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Eruption threatens RP rice production

By Christine Gaylican

THE COUNTRY'S rice production target of 13.5 million metric tons for this year may no longer be achieved because of Mayon Volcano's eruption, Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Q. Montemayor yesterday said.

"There would be a significant effect on the country's full-year rice production, though we are still determining the extent of the damage to crops," Montemayor said.

Despite the expected shortfall, the Department of Agriculture has not recommended any new rice importation to the Office of the President other than the 300,000 metric tons the National Food Authority had initially acquired in the first quarter.

The province of Albay, where the volcano is located, is a valuable source of palay, corn, abaca and other fruits, Bureau of Agricultural Statistics (BAS) Director Romeo Recide said.

Legazpi City and the adjoining towns could contribute at least 60,000 metric tons of palay in six months. For the entire year of 2000, the province produced some 124,062 MT. Aside from palay, Albay is also a source of corn, abaca, pineapples and other fruits.

Recide said the BAS was hoping that Cagayan Valley and Central Luzon could offset the rice crops destroyed by Mayon Volcano.

But in the first quarter, the country's rice production dropped because of the delayed planting of rice in Cagayan Valley and Central Luzon as a result of too much rainfall that disrupted the normal cropping cycle, according to the BAS.

Mudflow alert up; Mike vows aid for baby

(From page A1)

Mayon Volcano. The channels are heavily silted.

Phivolcs officials asked evacuees living within the 6-kilometer permanent danger zone and the 8-kilometer extended danger zone not to return home just yet because of the threats of lahar and mudflow.

Phivolcs Director Raymundo Punongbayan had earlier warned of more explosive eruptions following the major eruption on Sunday. He said lava fountaining could signal the explosions.

Lava is slowly flowing from the summit toward the southeast lower slope of the volcano along Bonga Gully.

Phivolcs survey teams noted that the lowermost portion of the lava flow was already 4.3 kilometers from the summit.

Incandescent

The lava flow is constantly shedding incandescent boulders, releasing gases and ash that burn vegetation along its path.

Although the volcano appeared to be quiet, the Phivolcs registered three explosions at 4:59 a.m. and 2:28 p.m., Tuesday, and at 4:03 a.m., yesterday.

The explosion at 2:28 p.m. generated an ash cloud that rose to about a kilometer above the summit and caused small lava avalanches in the upper slopes within the Bonga Gully.

During the past 24-hour observation period, Phivolcs registered 84 episodes of high frequency but short-duration tremors and 24 low frequency-type volcanic quakes.

Low frequency quakes, according to the Phivolcs, indicate the presence of magma just beneath the surface of the volcano.

Phivolcs noted that gas emissions were still high at 3,620 tons per day, way above its baseline data of 500 tons per day.

Evacuees

As of yesterday noon, there were 43,529 evacuees at the various temporary shelters in Albay province.

The First Gentleman was supposed to be in Negros for his 55th birthday party but he decided to visit Albay to extend assistance to the evacuees.

"He is celebrating his birthday yet he is the one giving us gifts in the form of food and medical assistance, and that is very good of him," Myrna Estancio told the INQUIRER.

"Thank God, he visited us here. We are happy that help came. At first, we suffered from hunger because the ration was slow," a resident, who asked not to be named, told the INQUIRER.

The First Gentleman also visited the Bagumbayan Elementary School and the Albay Central School where the residents of the adjoining villages of Buyuan and Matanag are accommodated.

The Gogon Elementary School where Arroyo saw Alaiza is the temporary shelter for the residents of Barangays Mabinit and Bonga, Legazpi City, who fled the raging pyroclastic flows at the height of the explosions on Sunday.

Alaiza's mother said she could not bring her daughter to a doctor because her husband Charlie was earning only enough to feed his family.

Until Arroyo came, Alaiza's parents had left the fate of their daughter to God.

"I want to serve my fellow Bicolanos. That is why I decided to spend my birthday here," the President's husband told the INQUIRER.

Old woman gets attention

At the Bagumbayan evacuation center, Arroyo hugged a child and attended to an old woman named Cresencia Alarmis, 86, of Buyuan who was in need of medicine and treatment for her asthma.

"All my six siblings are already married and my husband died when they were still very young," Alarmis said.

She and Alaiza are only two of the hundreds of residents of Mayon villages who badly need medical attention.

The First Gentleman called on government agencies and private donors to extend assistance to the province.

"Their conditions are pitiful. They need our help," he said of the evacuees.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development has started augmenting the food supplies of the evacuees in towns that needed more food.

Because of the natural calamity, all programmed projects to be funded by the provincial government would be held in abeyance, according to Albay administrator Fernando Colle.

"We have P23 million in calamity fund for this year, which is 5 percent of the province's internal revenue allotment (IRA). The province is using its last year's IRA because this year's budget has not yet been approved," Colle said.

He said the province was expecting a budget deficit of at least P67 million this year.

Damage to agriculture has yet to be accounted for by the Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council.

Gov. Al Francis C. Bichara said they would extend assistance to the farmers to rehabilitate their farms. They have asked Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor for help.

ALAIZA NUÑEZ, whose feet are deformed, touches Mr. Mike Arroyo on his visit to an evacuation center at the Gogon Elementary School in Legazpi Center. EDWIN BACASMAS

Waste . . .

(From page A1)

The environmental pressure group Greenpeace said the Belgian study affirms the wisdom behind the Philippine ban on waste incineration as provided in the Clean Air Act.

MMDA chided

The group chided the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) for failing to effectively implement the waste segregation and recycling objectives of the Ecological Waste Management Act of 2001.

Ironically, Greenpeace said, a recent media survey showed that even MMDA employees are not practicing waste segregation in their households.

The group also criticized the reported resistance of many hospitals in complying with the three-year phase-out period mandated for existing incinerators.

"It is ironic that medical facilities, which are supposed to safeguard public health, are themselves becoming principal sources of pollutants that pose serious health risks to communities, especially children," Hernandez said.

Litany of ailments

"Shrinking testicles are but another item in the growing litany of ailments connected with the burning of mixed rubbish," Von Hernandez, campaign director for Greenpeace Southeast Asia, said in a statement.

Greenpeace said the incineration of waste, whether in the open or in enclosed facilities, emits toxic chemicals such as dioxins and PCBs. These chemicals are being examined for their alleged role in altering the sex ratio among populations resulting in the birth of more females than males. These toxic pollutants have previously been linked to cancer, heart disease and various breathing illnesses.

The group called on the government to act swiftly and decisively against the rampant open burning of waste as well as the continuing indiscriminate use of hospital waste incinerators.

"The health and environment-hazards associated with waste burning would continue to escalate especially in the country's urban areas where the indiscriminate burning of garbage remains unchecked," said Hernandez.

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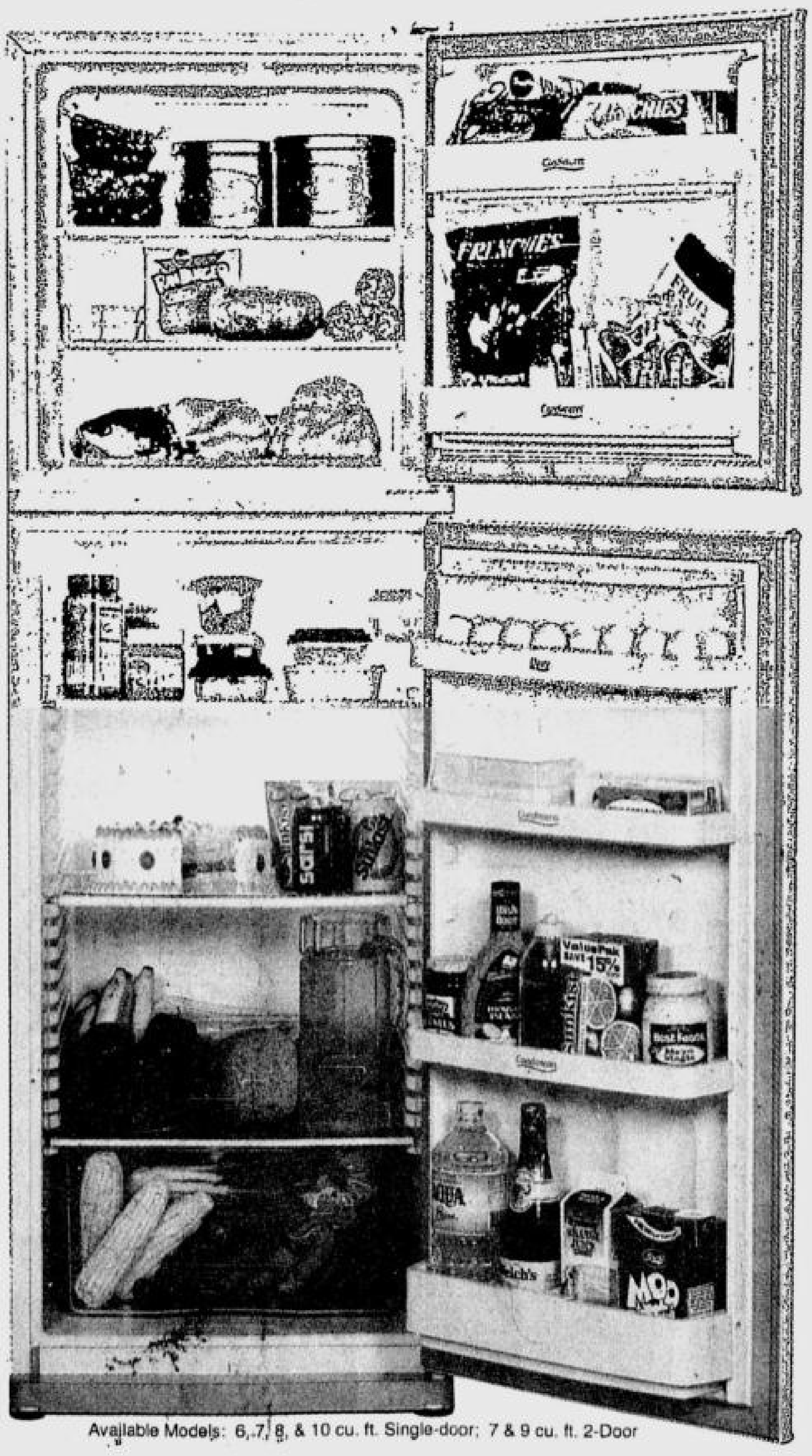

I'm not just an action star or namer of streets —Revilla

By Armand N. Nocum

SEN. Ramon Revilla wants to correct the impression he is only an amulet-wearing action star and sponsor of inconsequential bills in Congress.

Stung by the Senate secretary's recent comment that though Revilla had filed many bills, these were concerned mainly with the renaming of streets, Revilla issued a press statement yesterday in which he said he has filed substantial bills on such important issues as crime, education, graft and public works.

Although he admitted having filed many bills to rename streets, he said most of the bills originated in the House of Representatives and he had to act on them being the chair of the Senate public works committee.

"It was my responsibility to consider and sponsor bills transmitted from the House even if they were only proposals for renaming streets, highways, avenues and the like," he explained.

He said such bills were usually filed by congressmen on the prodding of local officials.

Revilla was reacting to Senate Secretary Lutgardo Barbo's recent comment that it was not enough for senators to be jostling to be first to file bills, but they should also consider the quality of their bills.

Barbo noted that Revilla had filed many bills, but these concerned mostly the renaming of streets.

Barbo should have "checked with the Senate bills and index service before issuing such a falsehood," Revilla said in his statement.

"Of the more than 72 bills and 16 resolutions I filed in the 11th Congress, not one involved the renaming of a street," he said.

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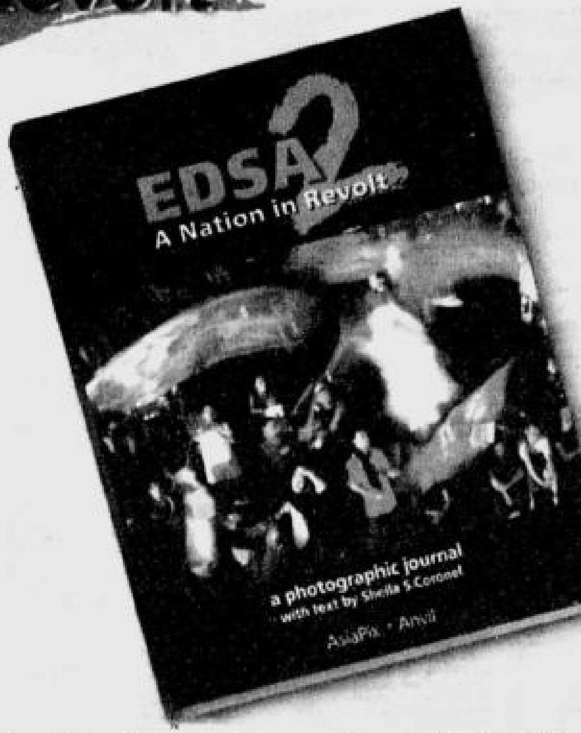

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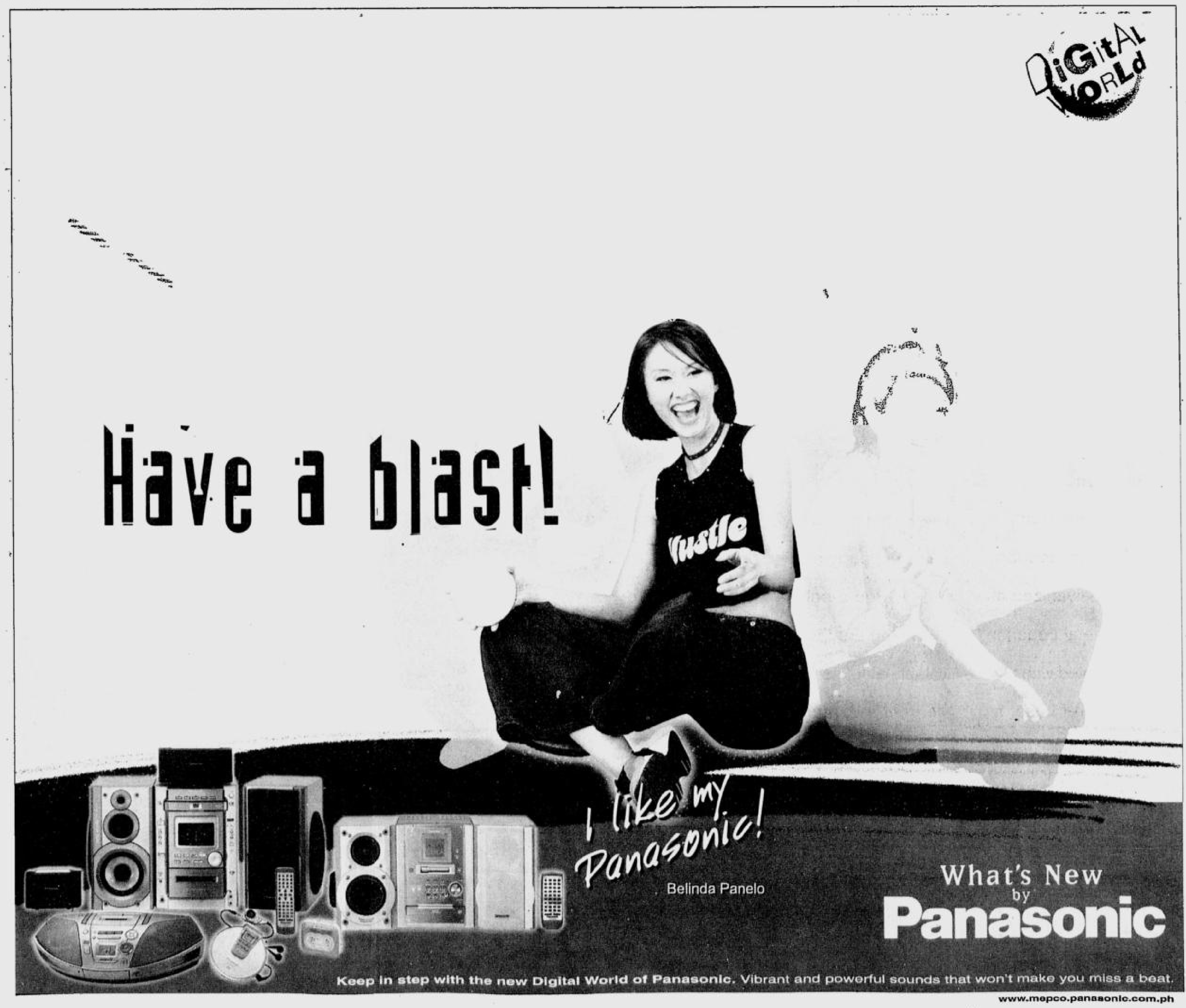

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Haven for dirty money

EDITORIAL

THE PHILIPPINES has come under mounting international pressure to pass an anti-money laundering law by the middle of next month so that it can be removed from the blacklist of nations classified as havens for money derived from illegal activities.

Three bills seeking to stop the Philippines from being the sanctuary of laundered money or a transit point for exporting it have been pending in the legislature since the 10th Congress, but they have failed to pass because of strong opposition from a domestic banking lobby worried over the consequences of lifting the banking secrecy law.

The administration of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, aware of the international deadline, is preparing a new bill to be presented to the new Congress. The bill seeks to ensure that the country "is not used as a money laundering site, transit point and haven for the proceeds of criminal offenses committed abroad." Offenses classified as unlawful activity include bribery, illegal gambling, drug trafficking, tax fraud, smuggling, economic plunder and corruption.

The 29-nation Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development described the Philippines as one of the "non-cooperating nations" identified as havens for money laundering. These countries face a July 31 deadline to clean up their act or face sanctions such as isolation from international banking transactions.

The United States State Department last year warned that money laundering was on the rise in Asia due to official corruption, strict bank secrecy laws, traditional ethnic (mainly Chinese) underground banking networks, and in some countries, a lack of anti-laundering laws. "The Philippines has experienced an increase in foreign organized crime activity from China, Hong Kong and Taiwan," the report said. "Insurgency groups operating in the Philippines fund their activities through narcotics and arms trafficking and engage in money laundering through alleged ties of organized crimes."

The report identified the Philippines as one of six Asian countries that served as major money-laundering hubs, along with Hong Kong, China, Macau, India and Indonesia. The 26-member Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering based in Paris has defined money laundering as the "processing of criminal proceeds in order to disguise their illegal origin."

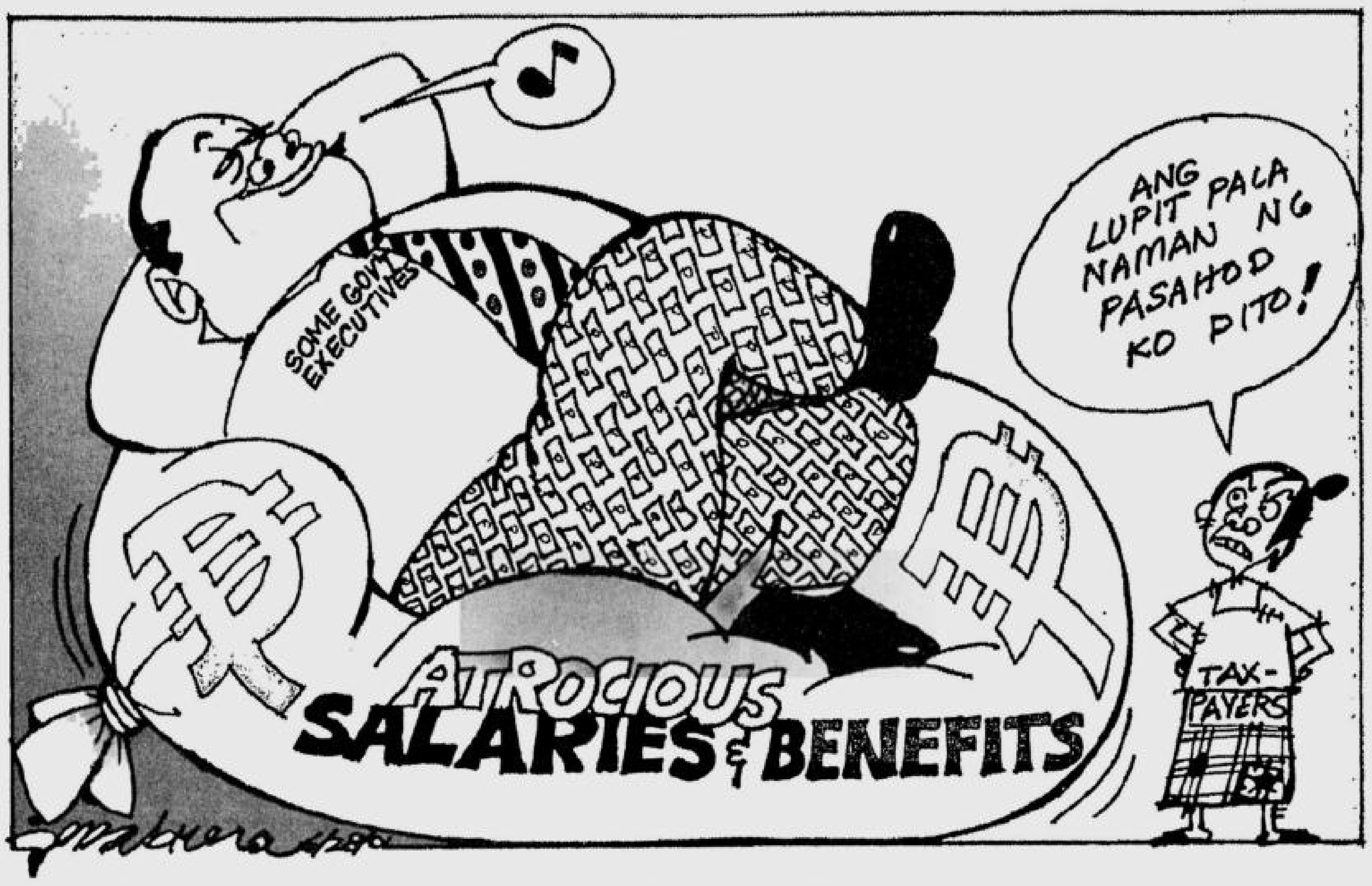
The proposed legislative measure derives a lot of inputs from the impeachment trial of deposed President Estrada. During the trial, evidence was introduced to indicate that the then president laundered money coming from illegal gambling payoffs and signed a false name on a P500-million banking transaction.

The bulk of documentary evidence came from banking transactions extracted by a subpoena issued by the impeachment tribunal. The extraction of evidence was done under extraordinary circumstances: the impeachment trial. The evidence, for example, handed over by the Equitable PCI Bank, which handled many of Estrada's accounts, and the witnesses it offered in the trial had repercussions on the bank. They confirmed that the bank was used for laundering unexplained wealth or money derived from illegal gambling, but the disclosure also led to heavy withdrawals from the bank by depositors in the Chinese-Filipino banking community, the bank's main clientele.

This dilemma illustrates the pressures against which the legislation is being revived in Congress: the international pressure which seeks to link the country into a global system of monitoring laundered money to curb corruption and trafficking of illegal commodities, and the domestic pressure to maintain the confidentiality of bank accounts.

Around $600 billion from drug cartels, Mafia barons or other criminal sources are believed to be recycled through banks each year. French Finance Minister Laurent Fabius has warned that he would propose penalties on blacklisted countries, adding that France was prepared to end all its financial transactions with them.

A middle ground might be considered by the Philippines. Former Finance Secretary Roberto de Ocampo has asked the Macapagal administration to amend the bank secrecy law. "We must revisit bank secrecy, not totally lift it, but allow the government to look at deposits on a case-by-case basis," he proposed. The government should be guided by the lessons learned from the impeachment trial.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High salaries must be immediately scaled down

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

IT is not enough to just freeze the salary increases of the already excessively paid executives of government-owned and controlled corporations (GOCCs) and government financial institutions (GFIs), as President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has ordered. They must also be pared down immediately to less scandalous heights. If it takes the budget department one year to come up with a pay rationalization plan, that means these officials will continue to collect their "atrocious" salaries for one more year.

Some heads of the 70 GOCCs and GFIs are being paid P10 million each year. To think that some of them, like the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) and the Social Security System (SSS), manage the funds of poorly paid members who get peanuts in benefits for their contributions. Others, like the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, are supposed to raise funds for charity. Its officials obviously believe that "charity begins at home."

The President was obviously shocked that many of her subordinates have much higher salaries than her. The interesting question is why she, or her predecessors, learned about this only now when this has been going on for a long time. Executives of GOCCs and GFIs have been abusing their powers and privileges for a long time now. No wonder most of these agencies are losing money.

The President should issue another executive order, or Congress should pass a law, removing from the boards of directors of these agencies the power to grant themselves and other high-ranking officials increases in salaries, allowances and other perks, such as free cars. All they have to do now is pass a resolution to that effect and appropriate the needed funds. Nobody objects since everybody shares in the bonanza. These agencies have in-house auditors, who are supposed to be the policemen of the finances, but they also share in the benefits, so they just keep quiet. If the others get pay increases, the auditor also gets an increase in allowance. If the others get free cars, the auditor also gets a free car.

All high-ranking officials of GOCCs and GFIs, as well as members of the board of trustees, have free cars and gasoline and drivers' allowances, in spite of the fact that they already have two or more cars of their own. Board members, on the other hand, attend meetings only once a month or once a week, so there is no reason to give them free cars. The only reason I see is greed. They don't need the additional vehicles, but because they're there for the taking, they take them. That is why our roads are congested. There are so many free government vehicles that shouldn't be there.

The administration is facing a ballooning budget deficit. If it would only recover all these government vehicles and sell them, it may be able to balance the budget. Like the pay scales, the President should also order a rationalization of the acquisition of vehicles. Officials of GOCCs and GFIs are abusing their privileges.

The same is true among local government units. Provincial boards and city councils vote for themselves free cars by merely passing resolutions and appropriating funds. The governor and the mayor share in the loot and in any case buy the cooperation of the board members and councilors by approving and even initiating the perks.

I have written previously about the governor of Bohol, a very poor province, who bought for himself not one, but two Pajeros, one for his use in the province and the other for use in Manila. Why he needs another Pajero in Manila when his post is in Bohol is beyond me. Anyway, so the provincial board members will not squawk, he also gave them one car each.

In fractious Caloocan, the mayor also gave his councilors one car each, courtesy of the Caloocan taxpayers, to buy their cooperation.

These are happening in many other places. Clearly, these are abuses and the Local Government Code should be amended to stop them. Meanwhile, the President should issue an order through the Department of Interior and Local Government stopping this nefarious practice.

By the way, the President's order freezing salary increases stops at the level of executive vice presidents. That's not enough. The pay of some senior vice presidents and even ordinary vice presidents are also scandalously high. And auditors should be ordered to be more strict in approving financial deals.

* * *

Hallelujah for the Supreme Court. Its decision ruling that the party list is only for the truly marginalized sectors stops another abuse. And it serves to highlight the woeful incompetence of the Commission on Elections. How can the major political parties like Lakas, Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC) and Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino (LDP) be marginalized? They already have their people in Malacañang, in the Cabinet and in Congress, so how can they be underrepresented? But the Comelec not only accredited them in the elections but was all set to proclaim them winners.

And how can sugar barons and real estate developers be marginalized?

The Court made it clear that the marginalized sectors listed in the Constitution included only labor, peasant, urban poor, indigenous cultural communities, women, youth and "such other sectors as may be provided by law, except the religious sector." "The party-list organization or party," it said, "must factually and truly represent the marginalized and underrepresented constituencies."

The Court also said that "the persons nominated by the party-list candidate organization must be Filipino citizens belonging to marginalized and underrepresented sectors, organizations and parties." In other words, entertainers in Manila like Kuh Ledesma cannot pretend to be a representative of marginalized cultural communities like the Aetas.

The Dover of our spirits

WINDMILLS

Jerry Barican

I MUST be getting old. I can still remember when Manila was beautiful. She had been afflicted by World War II the decade before, but even those ravages could not hide the youthful optimism of her 400 years and her civic pride. Century-old acacia trees provided a canopy over Taft Avenue and birds sang as you walked by. Some of the poor made their honest living by selling *kropeck* or roasted *castañas* in Plaza Sta. Cruz. Women wore veils in church and carried ornately decorated Spanish fans. Until the '60s rolled by, the only large squatter colonies in Manila were in Intramuros and Tondo.

When the Ateneo Grade School moved from its Padre Faura campus to the wilds of Loyola Heights in November of 1954, it might as well have moved to the moon. Cubao was an empty quarter except for an MWSS pumping station at the corner of the two-lane Highway 54, Edsa's predecessor, and Aurora Boulevard. By today's standards, we were all poorer. Only presidents and tycoons had airconditioning in their cars. Only a relatively few more had any cars at all. Another decade would pass before the country's first escalator would even be installed.

But what made Manila different, what marks the great gulf between the despair you see today in the streets and then, is that it was a city of hope—above all, a faith that things would be better tomorrow, somehow. Hadn't Channels 3 and 9 just pioneered black-and-white broadcasts? Hadn't transistor radios run on batteries just become available? Hadn't Sputnik just become the first man-made satellite? Hadn't Disneyland just opened? What would they think of next?

At lot, it turns out—mostly bad. The visage of Manila of 40 years ago shines through the mists of memory like a jewel on a pretty girl. Yes, today there are cell phones and texting, faxes, satellites, personal computers and CDs. But Metro Manila's squalor rivals Calcutta's. What was left of her beauty has been raped. Her acacia trees have been cut down, her songbirds silenced. Overpopulation, political demagoguery and corruption have destroyed not just her body but her soul.

Hyperbole has replaced civility in political discourse; cynicism has banished faith. We treat our animals with the callous cruelty with which we treat each other. The old ways are dying: no one gives up their seats to old ladies in our public transportation anymore. We have become so critical of each other that we have forgotten how to build, remembered only how to tear down. The Atenean idea of the man for others has been transformed by an unforgiving age into the commonplace behavior of each one for himself.

To many, it seems as if all our institutions are breaking down. Our families are broken up by the need of millions of parents to find jobs abroad. Our schools are often a parody of the name, capable only of providing diplomas but not an education. Elements of media appear by turns corrupt, incompetent, sanctimonious or unstintingly critical. We need a police to protect us from the police. The economy is pervaded by gloom. Our religions are indistinguishable from political parties or even armies. Many of our politicians are national jokes. We are riven by crime, insurgency and disagreements of every kind. Globalization is leaving us farther behind every day.

Worse, for the first time in memory, many Filipinos don't have an answer to how we shall overcome. The result is that many of our countrymen are doing the unthinkable. Their way out of the national dilemma is emigration. It is all too much for them. They are leaving and are taking their families with them. It is our national dark night of the soul.

Our real problem is not one of resources. We have been poorer and seen harder times before. It is one of the spirit, of character. We are all so overwhelmed by our collective problems that they have defeated our inherent courage and optimism. Abu Sayyaf, the crime wave, this seemingly ceaseless matter of plots and instability have been the last straws. People are voting with their feet.

The real challenge facing the administration is to reverse this tide of pessimism and to restore buoyancy and hope. We have a President whose qualities we can all admire. She is extremely hardworking and intelligent. She is sincere and, by all accounts, honest. She knows government and politics. She understands the problems of business while she has deep empathy for the needs of the poor. She has the makings of a good, even a great, President. But even the greatest cannot carry this burden alone.

Hers is a task akin to Lincoln's and Churchill's, but in a time of peace. She must inspire us to somehow find within ourselves reserves of courage and optimism we do not know we have. She must bring us together so that we can save ourselves from the morass we have created. She must remind us that problems are man-made and, with God's help, can be solved by ordinary men and women.

Without that spirit, that character, we are truly at the end of our rope and no program, no political party, no budget can provide an answer. With it, nothing is insurmountable. Here is the voice of an American, journalist Whitelaw Reid, watching the dogfights over the cliffs of Dover during the Battle of Britain in 1940, who "no longer felt afraid because he now had a sense of belonging to a cause and that made survival unimportant and death valuable," exulting in something larger than himself:

"I was for freedom. It was as simple as that. I realized the good that often can come from death. We were where we were and we had what we had because a whole line of our people had been willing to die. I understood Valley Forge and Gettysburg at Dover."

We do not need to die, but we do need to believe.

'New politics'?

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

IT'S too bad that Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice Francis Garchitorena has to ask for more "convincing" proof from the police authorities that there is danger lurking in the streets of Quezon City when former President Estrada is transported every day to the trial in the graft court from the Veterans Memorial Medical Center (VMMC) and returned. I hope and pray that Garchitorena's demand for more "convincing" proof does not become a self-fulfilling prophecy. It is really safer, more sensible and practical to hold that trial in the VMMC auditorium.

* * *

There's no way to view the report that PNP intelligence chief Reynaldo Berroya would be relieved as yet another saga in the rivalry between him and Senator-elect Ping Lacson. Assuming a high profile again in the efforts to remove Berroya are Teresita Ang-See, the Chinese-Filipino civic leader, and her bosom friend Carina Agarao. I recall that during the Ramos administration, when now Vice President Tito Guingona was justice secretary, he once told me that he was under tremendous pressure from the Chinese community to reinstate Lacson, who was then in the freezer due to his involvement in the Kuratong Baleleng case. It was Ang-See who led the pressure group.

* * *

The problem, however, is that Lacson is just as controversial as Berroya, except that the former appears to have a formidable PR staff. Recall that Justice Secretary Hernando Perez, in clearing former President Estrada of involvement in the Dacer double-murder case, said he would look into Lacson's possible role since he headed the now-defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF). Some of its officers were implicated in that case.

Interestingly last Saturday, National Security Adviser Roilo Golez told the media that 10 to 12 PAOCTF people remain "unaccounted for." It was unclear if Golez was referring to those implicated in the Dacer case, but he said he had asked PNP Director General Leandro Mendoza to do an inventory of the PAOCTF men and equipment.

* * *

At the Ugnayan forum last Saturday, I asked lawyer Rene V. Sarmiento, a member of the government (GRP) panel in the peace talks with the National Democratic Front, why the GRP agreed to resume the talks in Oslo, when that city, like the rest of the Scandinavian region, is frightfully expensive. Recall that the talks in Oslo were discontinued after the NDF's armed component, the New People's Army, claimed responsibility for the slaying of Quezon Rep. Marcial Punzalan and Cagayan Rep. Rodolfo Aguinaldo. The NDF panel wanted the talks in Oslo since it is close to Utrecht, where Jose Ma. Sison and Luis Jalandoni live.

Sarmiento stressed that there can be "no price tag on peace" and that though the peace process may be taking a long time, "it's still better than one day of violence that kills lives and shatters families."

There's no debate about this, but couldn't the talks be moved to a cheaper locale, such as Bangkok or Hong Kong? It's good for Sison and Jalandoni to be in Oslo as they are probably "euro-denominated," but the government has to contend with a much-depreciated peso.

* * *

How times change. Soon after Edsa I, Peping Cojuangco was criticized as a *trapo* as he was linked by rumors to rampant *jueteng* in his province, alleged deals by Kamag-anak Inc., etc. Now, in the letter of the chair of the Council on Philippine Affairs (Copa), William Esposo, published in the Philippine Star, Cojuangco is being extolled to high heavens even as Esposo attacks Joe de Venecia with a lot of venom. This recalls to mind the answer of a political pundit to a query from a puzzled citizen as to what "civil society" means. The pundit opined that "if one wins the election, he becomes a *trapo*; but if he loses, he becomes 'civil society'." Cojuangco retired undefeated after three terms, of course, but that that thing about becoming civil society applies to him.

* * *

I find it interesting, though, that Batanes Rep. Butch Abad, who is viewed as De Venecia's most serious rival for the speakership, is now saying that if he or Nueva Vizcaya Rep. Carlos Padilla doesn't succeed in bagging the post, they would join the opposition. Doesn't this make Abad and Padilla *trapos* too? I thought one's political stand is based on principles, but here they are, premising their continued membership in the People Power Coalition on getting the speakership. Is this "new politics"? Actually, rumors say Abad wants the appropriations committee chairmanship, while Padilla is eyeing the deputy speakership for Luzon. The problem is that De Venecia feels that these plum posts should go to Lakas, the dominant party in the PPC.

* * *

Cecile Guidote-Alvarez invited me to participate in a radio show of hers aired over dzRH every Sunday evening at 9:15. I told her that I'd be delighted to do so if we could use that forum to air citizens' programs geared toward poverty alleviation. I thought it would be a good idea to invite citizens who are working directly to help the poor, as this could encourage others who want to be of help to this sector, but who don't know how to go about it. Cecile liked the idea. We kicked off this show by inviting Makati civic leader Melon Recto-Silverio, who ran for Congress in Makati's first district. Melon's commitment to the poor of the premier financial center, who comprise 90 percent of its population, is certainly inspiring. During the campaign she saw the incredible poverty of Makati up close, and the day after her opponent, Teddy Boy Locsin, was proclaimed winner, Melon gathered her poorer supporters to find out their problems.

* * *

Jobs emerged as their No. 1 need, and she began matching their skills with employment opportunities in the wealthy villages. Melon could do this since she serves as secretary of the Sanctuario de San Antonio parish council. She also began a lending program. With her own funds, she began making down payments of P10,000 per tricycle, and distributed them to the most depressed families in Makati, so that they could eke out a living. With what they now earn, each recipient is able to meet the daily installment of P100.

Melon could comment competently on the government's plans to push housing communities in the outskirts of Metro Manila, as she was instrumental in putting together one such community for 300 families of the Mt. Pinatubo victims in Botolan, Zambales, with the help of her secular Franciscan group in the early 1990s. Melon said that for housing communities to succeed they have to answer all the basic needs, such as adequate water and power, and opportunities for work

I told Cecile Alvarez that a commitment such as Melon's is rare, and it should be harnessed not just for Makati but for the nation. Cecile agreed.

An unwelcome school

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

MOTORISTS passing along Greenmeadows Drive in the Ortigas area will surely be intrigued by the streamers hung across walls and gates of some houses proclaiming: "No to Paref-Northfield School! No to traffic and congestion!"

What on earth have the residents got against a school?

It turns out that the residents, through the homeowners' associations of Greenmeadows and surrounding villages, are protesting not so much the school itself, as where it will be put up, and the manner in which it is to be established.

The proposed site of Paref-Northfield, a "sister" institution of such exclusive schools as Southridge and Woodrose, is a 3.1-hectare property beside Christ the King Church. In fact, according to the proposed plan, the school property even encompasses the parish parking lot, which was opened to the parishioners' use through an agreement with the Quezon City government.

And there lies the rub. The proposed school site was actually designated an "open space" by the developer for use of the residents in the area. The title has since been transferred to the city government.

By virtue of a special resolution based on an "urgent measure" sent by Mayor Mel Mathay last March 20, the city council approved the construction of the school on the property, rent-free, for a period of 50 years. The resolution was premised on the agreement of Ortigas and Co., the developer, to the use of the property by the school; and the endorsement by the Third Greenmeadows Homeowners Association of the proposal to build a school on the site.

Homeowners' associations in the surrounding villages, however, say there are problems with both the legality and morality of the plan.

* * *

OFFICIALS of nearby residents' associations say they learned about the proposed school construction only after they "heard about" the recent groundbreaking rites. After confirming the report, they investigated the background of the project and the grounds for legal action, if any.

In a letter to Vice Mayor Connie Angeles and Councilor Godofredo Liban II, the Coalition of Homeowners Associations or Coha is requesting the recall of the special resolution for several reasons.

One is that "it will place Mayor Mathay in a compromising situation because it looks like that the agreement was railroaded as a midnight contract." Second, "only some of the residents of Greenmeadows 3 appeared to have endorsed the establishment of a school over an 'open space'," even if the "open space" was meant to be an integral part of the complex of open spaces in the different phases of Greenmeadows and nearby subdivisions that had originally been part of a single subdivision.

Coha also maintains that Ortigas and Co. "has no legal basis to lift the restriction of 'open space' in the covering title, which had already been transferred to Quezon City," besides which it had not offered any suitable replacement for the "open space" to be converted.

* * *

IN SUM, the homeowners say the case appears to be "a grand conspiracy among public officials, private individuals and proponent-school to devote an open space to the exclusive benefit of a private entity."

According to protesting homeowners, based on current market value of property in the upscale residential area, the land alone is worth over P1 billion. By allowing a private entity to build and operate a school on the land rent-free for 50 years, they say, Quezon City officials could be charged with graft for misappropriation of government property.

Observers also note the irony that the management of a school which ascribes to the goal of "(forming) good moral character through development or practice of virtues," should seek to establish the school under a cloud of impropriety, irregularity, if not outright illegality. Why the lack of transparency and the unseemly haste by which the memorandum of agreement and council resolution was pushed through? What did those behind the plan—the parent-owners of Paref-Northfield as well as Quezon City officials and officials of the Third Greenmeadows Homeowners Association—have to hide from the public and to their neighbors?

And it's not as if the residents in the area are bereft of choices of schools to which to send their children. If anything, the Ortigas-Greenhills-Pasig area is "over-populated" by exclusive schools, religious or otherwise. What compelling reason is there, then, to take shortcuts with requirements and enter into an agreement grossly disadvantageous to the public, to build a school which is clearly unwelcome?

* * *

THE WOMEN of Malolos Foundation Inc., is putting up an exhibit on "Filipino Women Who Broke the Barrier," dedicated to women "who aspired to achieve in a profession traditionally exclusive to men." Anyone who knows of a woman pioneer is urged to get in touch with the foundation so that she can be counted among the country's women leaders.

The foundation was established by descendants of the 21 young women who in the late 19th century challenged Spanish ecclesiastical authorities when their request to the governor-general to put up a night school for the teaching of Spanish was denied. Their unprecedented action inspired Rizal to write his historic letter in which he expressed his belief in the inherent equality of women and their role in building the nation.

The exhibit on "Filipino Women Who Broke the Barrier" will be put up at the historic Casa Real Shrine in Malolos. Contact Joan M. Montefalcon at the foundation's secretariat, ground floor, Museo Pambata, Roxas Boulevard cor. South Drive, Tel. No. 522-9008, Fax No. 522-1246 or Mercia Aquino at Tel. No. 824-7741 or Fax No. 822-7737.

Remember

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

MANY people feel like they are on a roller-coaster and they can't get off. And the oxygen seems to be running out.

Are things happening too fast for you? Do you feel like you are overtaken by events and you are not able to process the bad ones and relish the good ones?

Nakakapagod na. This is how many people say they feel when asked about the state of the country and the state they are in. And they are not even the president of the Philippines.

It really has been a roller coaster ride in the dark not so unlike one of those killer-rides in Disneyland from which you emerge with your eyes dislodged from their sockets, your bones out of place, your lungs in tatters and your soul forced out to another sphere. But you bravely stagger out of that dark, cavernous space pretending it has all been an exciting experience.

It started to peak last year with the Basilan hostage-taking that ended with the torture and death of a priest and several hostages. This was followed by the Sipadan hostage-taking, then by the *jueteng* scandal, the Bubby Dacer abduction, the impeachment trial of then President Estrada, People Power II and the swearing in of President Macapagal, the short-lived euphoria, Estrada's arrest, then the so-called Edsa III, the sickening national elections, the sorry aftermath. After all these, a surreal replay of the Sipadan hostage-taking in Dos Palmas, again, courtesy of the Abu Sayyaf.

As one observer said, *para tayong binabasketbol.* Even the number of names of places and people that we have to remember are rapidly increasing. Victims, villains, plunderers, murderers. This case, that case. And the same faces and images come in and out of the idiot box and hog the front pages of newspapers.

The Abu Sabaya look (shades, turban and hardware) is again in vogue in the news, so are fatigue uniforms, headless torsos, torso-less heads. With these go the plummeting peso, the new wave of urban kidnappings, bad weather, bad roads. Destabilization plots, coup jitters. The erupting Mayon Volcano provided a welcome change. At least this was natural.

So where's the good news? If we could find them? Someone suggested: look to the recent past. And the recent past comes in the form of a photographic journal, "Edsa 2, A Nation in Revolt" published by AsiaPix and Anvil.

One of the people behind this book, Melvyn Calderon of AsiaPix kept shoving the book to me so I would tell readers about how good it is. And indeed it should be good especially if you feel that that glorious feeling of having done your part to exorcise this land of a corrupt presidency has been snatched so rudely you didn't have an extra moment to relish it.

So dig into this book and recapture those months, weeks and final days that proved we still have what it takes. The text, "The Unmaking of a President" was written by Sheila S. Coronel and the 267 photographs shot by 53 photographers.

The photos tell the story that starts with the movie-star president, Joseph Estrada, in Malacañang. Here is the fairy-tale beginning that slowly turns ugly, excessive and out of control.

And then the nose-dive. It is downhill for Estrada as the anti-Erap fever gains momentum. The photographs are grouped and presented in a chronological sequence. The Movie-Star President; Exposé: Jueteng and Other Scandals; The Trial: The President Under Fire; Day One: Rage Against the Vote; Day Two: The Gathering Storm; Day Three: Impasse at Edsa; Day Four: Defection of the Generals; Day Five: A New President; A Nation in Revolt: Edsas in the Provinces; The End: Goodbye Erap. The Epilogue shows photos of Edsa III and the pro-Erap backlash that was quelled.

Photographs don't lie. As the back cover text says: "(The) photographs unmask the real Estrada and reveal that the image he projected was different from what he really was: a president who took advantage of his popularity to rob the country blind."

"Edsa 2" is not all about the bad and wrong things that Estrada and his midnight cronies did, it is more about the people who worked to expose, unmask and strip him bare and show the emptiness of his promises.

But more than the who, is the how. How had we come to that calamitous chapter in our history? How did it all happen, how did we do it? Ah, the Filipino creativity and flair.

Photographs could show us things that escaped the mind and the mind's eye when they happened. Unlike a moving video footage that carries the viewer along, still photographs say, stop and see. Behold. There is no hurry now. A video clip could be rewound, its contents examined and enlarged. It could be ran back and forth until one has seen enough of it and heard enough. A photograph on a page is a finished work. That is all there is—and more. It is still but it moves. It is silent but it speaks—through our eyes and straight to our innermost receptors.

Although "Edsa 2" is a story told through still photographs, it moves and climaxes with the fast-paced events that moved a nation to rise in protest. Many photos leap from the page, but a good many also invite the viewer to keep still and look back. (Some of my favorite photos are the ones by Aaron Favila on the Pages 106-107 spread and by Romy Gacad on the Pages 88-89 spread.) They do not rewind like a video, but they help rewind the images in one's memory. So that remembering, we may find strength and say, it was all worth it.

* * *

On the lighter side. "People Power *Uli!*" a scrapbook about Edsa II from the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism is another book to have. It contains jokes, text messages, photos and digital images that show how Filipinos waged the multi-media revolt that made Estrada wave goodbye.

Fiesta

YOUNGBLOOD

Sol N. Latorre

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

I AM a voter for sale from Kaalimanguhan City. Yes, I sell my vote. That's the reason I was among those who rejoiced when El Viejo, after spending a decade in exile, came back with his whole *mestizo* tribe and ran for city mayor while his son, El Mestizo, who could hardly speak a sentence in Waray, ran for Congress. That was in 1998, more than 12 years after their tribe was booted out of the islands.

I welcomed El Viejo's return because I was starting to feel cheap accepting P100 from local politicians. I wanted a higher price for my vote. The peso's devaluation, tuition increases and oil price hikes were not kind on my little pocket. This time, I wanted a politician who understood the needs of his constituents, particularly coping with inflation. This time, I wanted a politician who could give more than P100.

El Viejo did not disappoint me. He came with a truckload of money. After preparing the payroll, he began handing out P500 to barangay officials, and then to teachers and media men. But since I didn't belong to any of those groups, I could not dictate the amount I wanted for my vote.

El Viejo was also the first politician in Kaalimanguhan to bring actors and actresses. Thanks to him, our elections became star-studded like Famas night. Finally I got to meet my idols: Jennifer Sevilla, Isabel Granada and Inday Garutay. And of course, I would not miss seeing the wife of our congressman, La Actriz.

With all these come-ons, it was no surprise that El Viejo and El Mestizo won. In fact, they would have beaten the Pied Piper without playing a tune. For the first time in 1998, the voters of Kaalimanguhan, who used to wait inside their homes for the *kamang* (the distribution of money and sample ballots at dawn), could not control themselves. They spilled out in the streets like rats.

But who could resist the temptation? They had heard through his political leaders that El Viejo would be giving P400 to every voter. That was 300 percent more than what I used to be paid for my vote. And if there were 10 voters in a family, it would get a total of P4,000 for writing two words!

And the money was real. That's why some of my fellow voters for sale complained on radio and even to the Comelec that they did not receive their share. Some talked against the ward leaders, and others even attacked them physically. Some wrote the names of their barangay chair and *kagawad* on their ballots, while others simply boycotted the elections, although they were not members of any leftist group.

That's how festive elections have become in Kaalimanguhan since El Viejo and his tribe came back. Not even Christmas or New Year's Eve can match the gaiety of our elections. Election day has become the greatest feast day in the city.

Despite all this, El Viejo can still declare with a straight face and in all humility: "I'm not a politician, I am a businessman." Truly Imeldific.

Three years after their return, El Viejo and his tribe felt so sure about their hold on the electorate that they wanted to expand their territory to include the second district of Kandayaw. El Viejo let his other son, El Major, run for a seat in the House of Representatives.

El Major, who had never spent a single year of his life in the district, was pitted against the wife of El Apostol. El Apostol, who held the post for nine consecutive years, knew the elections would be a battle of millionaires.

When I heard about the contest shaping up in the second district, I almost transferred my registration there. And I was not wrong. The elections turned into an auction. When El Major gave voters P300, El Apostol and his wife raised the their bid to P500. In one town, it was said, the bidding reached P1,000. With that kind of inducement, even Santa Claus would have registered in Barugo.

Meanwhile in my district, El Mestizo, our congressman, was challenged by El Anunciador. The latter enjoyed enormous popularity because of his work in a giant radio and television network. But I was not expecting big money from El Anunciador. I know he could not afford to match the P300 offer of El Viejo and El Mestizo. And indeed, El Anunciador's operators could only give a measly P50 on election day.

El Viejo didn't disappoint me again. Three days before the elections, his people were already giving aid at his residence. The amount was P300 for everyone. Whether you were naughty or nice, so long as your name was on the voters' list, you got the cash gift.

That's what I like best about El Viejo: He does not choose his beneficiaries. Indeed, El Viejo is not only generous, he is egalitarian too.

Learning from their past experience, my fellow voters for sale were wide awake for the next three days and nights. From dusk till dawn, they gathered again in the streets. They looked like commuters during a jeepney strike. But I knew they were not, because they would gather there at 2 o'clock in the morning. Why would thousands of people from all over the city gather in the streets after midnight? Of course, they were not waiting for the lunar eclipse. They were waiting for the cash gift. As we would say in our native tongue, "*Nagpapabadil*" (literally, waiting for the dynamite).

Anyway, when the smoke cleared, El Viejo, who can barely see things around him, won. The piglets bought with funds from City Hall and which his people distributed to my fellow voters during the campaign must have helped. Or maybe their threat to cross out the names of voters who would attend the campaigns and rallies of their opponents (meaning no cash gift) was effective.

However, his two sons lost. El Mestizo was unseated by El Anunciador, while El Major was defeated by El Apostol's wife.

Up to now, they must still be wondering how they lost. How could someone from the great tribe lose in their own *balwarte* (bailiwick)? Where did the Imeldific charm go? Ah, even their kinsmen from Ilocos must be wondering.

Well, I cannot give them an explanation either. I am merely a voter who waits with hands open to accept their gifts before voting. But I heard that El Viejo and his tribe are ashamed of the results. I know they can hardly face the other tribes in Congress and the Senate. Their pride has been bruised. And so I expect them to attempt a grand comeback in the 2004 elections.

Now, that is something I am very eagerly anticipating. That will mean more food, more entertainers and more cash. Oh, how I will love the next elections. Today, I can already start buying on credit from Mana Nena's *sari-sari* store. She knows I will be able to pay her in full when the next elections come.

Sol N. Latorre, 21, is taking up post-graduate studies at the University of the Philippines in Diliman.

Notice to Youngblood contributors

Contributors to Youngblood who haven't received their checks are requested to inquire with the PDI cashier on Friday.

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Modest adventures

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

LATIN America was the only continent I hadn't visited. So when the invitation came for me to attend a conference in Ecuador last week dealing with social developments in Latin America, I needed no prodding. I jumped at the chance.

My only mistake was to try to make it there without a break. I went straight from Manila to Los Angeles to Miami to Quito, the capital of Ecuador, which took more than 30 hours. By the time I got there—sans luggage (American Airlines lost it along the way), after a couple of hours' delay en route to Miami (the plane had a minor engine problem which had to be fixed, they said, which did nothing to improve my disposition)—I was fagged out.

Well, you learn something every day. In this case, the difference between being 50 and 30.

* * *

The restaurant at Hotel Quito is open early, and I am the first one there courtesy of a fierce jet lag. It is still dark, it is only 5:30 a.m. in this part of the world. It is my first time to have a good meal in almost 24 hours and I am grateful for the feast laid out at the table. The coffee and food revive my spirits instantly. As does a particular red-colored juice that tastes like one of those exotic flavors of Del Monte or Dole. Someone would tell me later it comes from some variety of raspberry.

Quito is spectacular at dawn. The restaurant is on the seventh floor and has glass walls, so you can see everything around you. Through the gray haze of early morning, you can see huge balls of mists rolling down the city. Low-flying clouds cling to the mountains, stretching into the horizon, turning the scene into a fuzzy frieze. An arc of red light, like an aureole, shimmers in the east. It will be light soon.

Whole communities nestle at the foot of the mountains, frozen in sleep. The houses are generally low and squat, painted in bright colors, with red-tiled roofs. The taller buildings, which are not that tall, are on safer ground, on the plains below. The scene is not unlike Baguio, or at least the Baguio of the past: you get a sense of what the Baguio of the present might have been if people had been less greedy, or in a rush to despoil it.

But the scene is a little more dramatic for the majesty of the Andes ranges. You see mountains all around you, some touching the sky, some low and undulating, some with very flat tops, running almost like a straight line. There is rock everywhere, as far as the eye can see. This is a city built on rock, carved out from rock, seized from rock. But it has not overrun rock. The houses at the foot of the mountains look a little like a puny horde laying siege to a proud fortress. The fortress will hold easily, probably till the end of time. It was there when time began.

This is *montañosa* country, and the people here love the mountains. "I can last for only a few days on a beach," one of them would tell me later, "but I can stay in the mountains for weeks."

Something I read a long time ago whispers in my ears, a Zen riddle or koan: "Before I knew Zen, mountains were only mountains. When I thought I knew Zen, mountains were no longer mountains. When I finally knew Zen, mountains were again mountains."

The waiter asks, "*Mas café, Señor?*" I say, "*Si, gracias.*"

* * *

You know it in theory: Latin America has only two languages, Spanish and Portuguese, the Spanish being spoken by most of the countries there, and the Portuguese only by a few countries, but which includes Brazil, which occupies a good deal of the continent. But it is quite another thing seeing—or hearing—it in practice. Everyone speaks Spanish, with a rapidity that leaves me breathless. They are very friendly though, and though most know only a smattering of English—the way I know only a smattering of Spanish (I should have taken my Spanish teacher in college more seriously)—we understand each other well enough. They laugh about one another's accents, but they speak a common language. Even the delegates from Brazil speak Spanish. The delegates from French-speaking Canada speak Spanish as well.

How very different things are in Asia, I tell myself. When we meet, we speak in English, which is not the language most of our countries speak. I do not know that the articulateness and passion with which Latin Americans talk—they like to quote Pablo Neruda, who seems to have captured their spirit in a way no politician or economist has—come solely from the "Latin character." It seems to come too from being able to speak in their own tongue. From being able to speak from the pit of their souls.

I am particularly impressed by a couple of delegates who can speak Spanish, French and English. One of them is sharing our table and is translating for everybody. We get to talking at one point, and he asks me if English is the language I speak at home. I say no, it is Tagalog, which is the language spoken in Metro Manila. He asks me if I was born in Manila. I say yes, but I grew up in a place called the Bicol region, and so speak another language, which is Bicolano. But I write in English because that is the language of my newspaper. "So every day, you get to use all three languages?" he asks. I say yes.

He is deeply impressed and tells the others.

* * *

I take a shower early this morning. I want hot water because it is bitter cold. The room has a heater, but I haven't turned it on because I like the cold. I open the faucet marked "h" and wait for a couple of minutes. When I get back to the shower, I find that the water is still icy cold. I remind myself that Ecuador is a small and poor country, one of many that belong to what used to be called the Third World and which is now called the South.

I decide instead to just wash my face with cold water. I open the faucet marked "c." Surprise, surprise, it gives out hot water almost instantly.

I suddenly remember that the Spanish word for hot is "*caliente*" and the Spanish word for cold is "*helado*."

* * *

I keep seeing Joey Ayala everywhere, with long braided hair.

Transgenders

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

AT A RECENT international conference in Manila, someone supposedly attended a session titled "Transgender issues" and sat in the room becoming more and more confused as the papers were delivered. After some time, he finally got around to asking his seatmate, "When are they going to discuss migration?"

"Transgendered" is one of those new words that float around, their meaning still being processed. For the bewildered participant at the Manila conference, it had something to do with migration, which was sort of correct but not in a way he had expected.

To explain "transgendered," I will have to describe its broader use: "transgendered" is the "T" in "LGBT," which means "Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered" communities, a term coined by gay rights activists. "LGBT" itself has gone through several incarnations, guided by excruciating political correctness.

In the beginning, if I may present a kind of sexual genesis story combined with a quickie course on sexuality, it was just "gay and lesbian" but that term was considered sexist: why gay men first and then lesbians? The term was also criticized for excluding bisexuals. In response to this criticism, "gay and lesbian" became "lesbian, gays and bisexuals."

Before moving on, let me explain those terms (I'm sure you already know but I want to make sure). "Gay" is more or less a synonym for homosexual, meaning someone attracted to people of the same sex. Used in the phrase "gay and lesbian," "gay" is meant to refer to "gay men" while lesbians are "gay women." "Bisexuals," on the other hand, are people who are attracted to both sexes. (The slang term "ac/dc" is a wonderful metaphor—you can be nicely plugged in or you can fit snugly like batteries.)

Was "lesbian, gay, bisexual" accepted? No, the next ones to complain were transsexuals. Transsexuals are people who believe they were born in a wrong body and need to have their sex changed. Many people confuse "transsexuals" with "homosexuals," but these are two different categories. Most lesbians and gay men are perfectly happy with their existing "equipment."

For a very brief time then, people would talk about "lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transsexuals" but somewhere along the road, the word "transgendered" propped up not only to accommodate transsexuals but the many other gender categories which were being "discovered" in non-Western societies and which didn't quite fit into the Western definitions of "lesbian," "gay" and "bisexual."

The local *bakla* was one such category. We tend to translate "*bakla*" into "gay" or "homosexual" but that rendition is not quite accurate. "Gay" or "homosexual" in a Western setting refers to someone attracted to the same sex. In Western societies, the "rule" is that gay men go to bed with gay men, lesbians with lesbians. In the Philippines, a *bakla*, at least traditional ones, will not go to bed with another *bakla*—such behavior is bound to set off thunder, lightning, earthquakes and, worst of all, *tsismis*.

Bakla is more than "homosexual." The *bakla* (and loose equivalents such as the *bayot* among Cebuanos and *agi* among Ilonggos, as well as the *kathoey* of Thailand and the *waria* of Indonesia) considers himself a male with a female heart—*pusong babae*. He's not quite transsexual; many are not interested in a sex-change operation. A *bakla* is, literally, a "third sex." The *bakla* considers himself almost-female, cross-dressing on a daily basis, often becoming more female than females in the sway of the hips, the thick makeup and the use of women's clothing.

The *bakla* is attracted to men, which makes him homosexual—well, sort of, but not in the Western sense. The catch here is that it's not just any male but real men, *tunay na lalake*, as in heterosexual men. A fellow *bakla* cannot become a boyfriend, although "*bakla*" is relative here and becomes the subject of much "*bakla-dar*" (as in "radar") in courtship. Signs of *bakla*-hood can be quite arbitrary. "You know," a *bakla* friend told me suspiciously, "my boyfriend is always singing songs from 'Miss Saigon.'" Goodbye boyfriend, hello Ate (Lea).

My lesbian friends have a favorite T-shirt showing a nurse presenting a newborn baby to the mother with the announcement, "It's a lesbian!" The caption is of course done tongue-in-cheek but it captures what I'm trying to say: people are probably born homosexual but you can't tell with a newborn child. Expressions of one's sexuality—L, G, B or T—come later, with great variation across cultures. "Transgender" tries to include the many categories in the world that defy Western definitions. (I haven't even discussed our *tibo*/tomboy, the *silahis* and, the most intriguing, the "*tunay na lalake*," men who self-identify as heterosexual but have sex with other men.)

Times do change. Many very masculine Filipino homosexuals now self-identify as "*bakla*" but have no problems about having a relationship with another "*bakla*" (and singing "Miss Saigon" duets). All that to the chagrin of more traditional *bakla*, who can now point to Mt. Mayon's eruption as the consequence of this abominable behavior.

As in so many aspects of Filipino culture, there's a class factor to all this. Upper-class Filipino homosexuals often discriminate against lower-class "*bakla*," accusing them of propagating negative stereotypes of the "screaming faggot." As far as I'm concerned, the sashaying cross-dressing *bakla* and the gruff *tibo* are the original gay liberationists in the Philippines, bold enough to go public and challenge gender boundaries.

There is a paradox to all this. In many ways, the *bakla* and the *tibo* are actually quite conservative, preserving often archaic definitions of male and female. "Goodness," I want to tell some of my *bakla* friends, "real women don't wear stiletto heels." As for some butch *tibo* friends, I want to go, "Only Erap and Jinggoy still use pomade." In a sense then, transgenders parody our fixed categories of what male and female are. Transgenders are trailblazers in the way they shuttle, migrate between genders.

This year's Gay Pride March is on Saturday, June 30. It starts at 3 p.m. at the Remedios Circle and goes on through the night with a street party.

LETTERS

Deaths caused by substandard drugs

AMID the national turmoil caused by the kidnapping of the Abu Sayyaf bandits, a very important IBON Features Special Report printed in major newspapers hardly was noticed. The report was about deaths resulting from use of substandard drugs.

Prescilla Galao, 41, a daycare teacher, bled to death a few hours after a normal delivery of a baby boy inside a public tertiary hospital in Tagbilaran City on June 5 last year. Though given high doses, the generic drug methylergometrin maleate, an injectable solution to stimulate uterine contraction after delivery, administered to her seemed to be of questionable quality and efficacy.

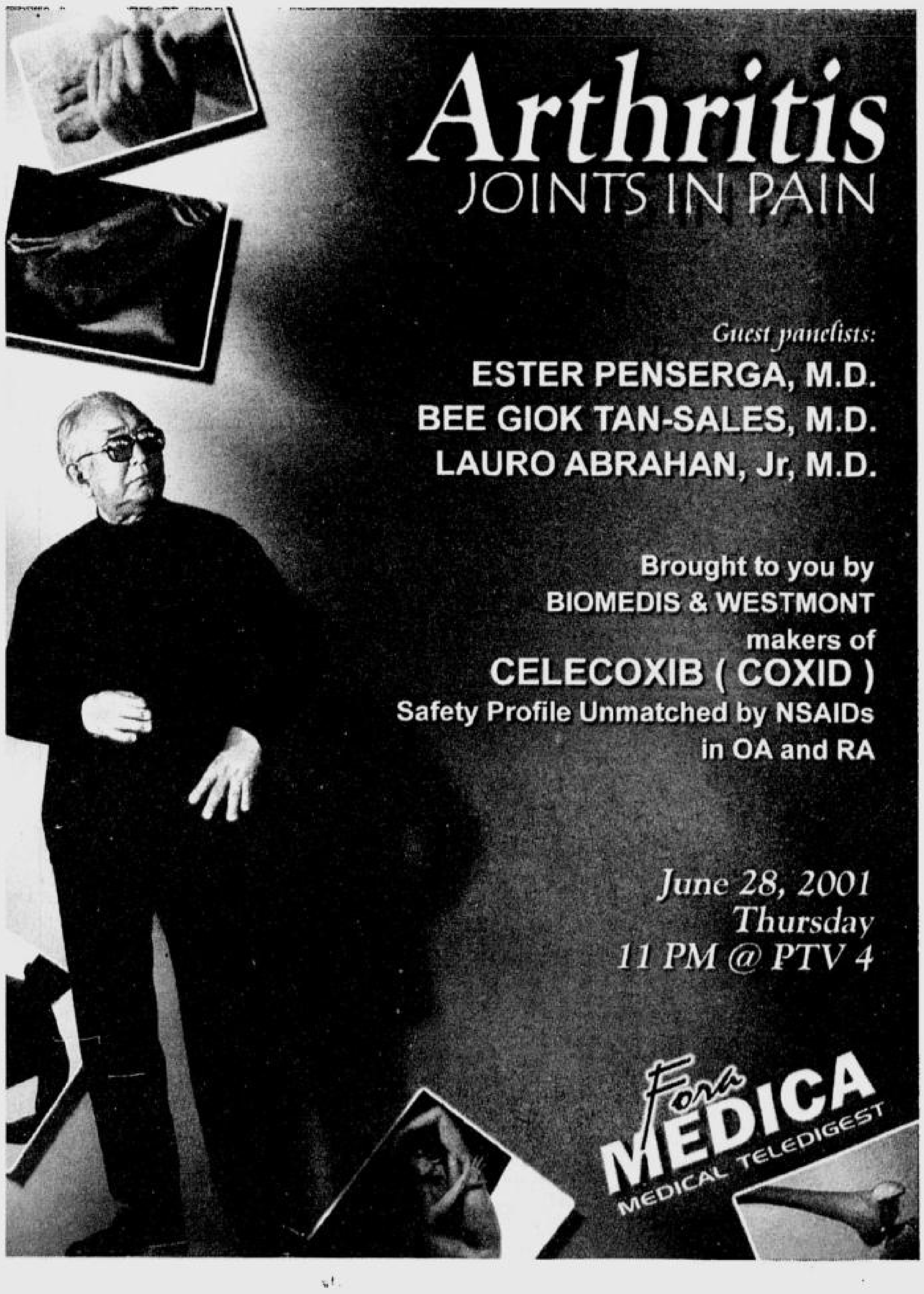
The report also stated that the Bohol incident is not the first documented case involving drugs of questionable quality. IBON said that in the last two years, the Bureau of Food and Drugs (BFAD) has received complaints from regional offices and government hospitals, particularly in the Visayas and Mindanao. These are backed by reports detailing the drugs' physical appearance indicating contamination or defect, as well as actual clinical accounts.

What happened to the Department of Health's claim that it is strengthening the capacities of health regulatory agencies? From BFAD Director William Torres' own account, the BFAD tests the drugs three times. If a first sample passes and the second does not, a third sample may be tested. If the third sample passes, then all previous negative findings are reversed.

This testing method is questionable and alarming. One negative result should be reason enough to recall and destroy an entire batch. That one defective drug that has not been withdrawn is a potential hazard to a patient.

The BFAD has failed to ensure public safety. It has not implemented internationally accepted standards or good manufacturing practices and has failed to strictly implement regulations and product standards. It has allowed the drug companies that violate the standards to go unpunished. The BFAD remains inutile in regulating the manufacture, marketing and distribution of medicines.

The DOH itself has not policed its own so-called regulatory agency. The situation is disheartening. Who will ensure that drugs are safe when the government coddles erring drug manufacturers and importers?—**REYNALDO LESACA JR., M.D., Health Alliance for Democracy, 233 Mayon St., Quezon City**



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Another case for Larry King

I WORKED up the courage to write this letter to you because of your June 24, 2001 front-page article about Larry King of CNN saving a Filipino baby through his Larry King Cardiac Foundation.

I have a friend whose 8-year-old daughter is confined at the Intensive Care Unit of the Philippine General Hospital, after undergoing two heart surgeries to repair a hole in her heart. She is now fighting for dear life.

After reading the article, I thought maybe my friend's little girl would be lucky enough to survive, through the good heart of King. I believe his "promise to himself to help heart patients in desperate need of lifesaving surgery" is not limited to residents of the United States only.

In this regard, I wish to solicit the readers' assistance in locating through the Internet or whatever means the Larry King Cardiac Foundation. I would appreciate it very much if they could reply to this letter soonest as the response might help save the life of my friend's little girl. They may send their responses to wincolina@yahoo.com or call or text cell number 0915-8068054.—**NANCY T. COLINA**

Praise for exercise of great restraint

THIS is in connection with the column of Ramon Tulfo dated May 8, 2001, titled "Heroic cop didn't deserve accolade."

To my mind, Tulfo was not only being unfair but his views were without factual basis. PO2 Grant Fausto Savedia was praised by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo for being "mega-tolerant," not for gallantry or firing at the mob. It's as simple as that.

Tulfo shouldn't have called Savedia stupid because in fact he used his head. If he did not, he would already be a dead hero! If, in the name of legitimate self-defense, he had fired his gun and killed someone among the angry mob, this would have given them reason to finish him off without mercy. Instead he followed the instructions of his superior to exercise maximum tolerance despite the fact he was dazed and down. Should we scorn and call him stupid or "*torpe*" for doing that?

Perhaps instead of scorn, we should pity, if not praise, Savedia. He suffered a broken leg and numerous injuries in the performance of his duty. Remember, he had been a cop for only six months and he did his duty the best he could under the circumstances.

Please give PO2 Grant Fausto Savedia a chance.—**GIL V. SAVEDIA, Blk 11, Lot 30, Katarungan Village, Muntinlupa City**

The WORLD

POPE John Paul II presents a girl with a gift in the Ukranian city of Lviv. AP

1 million welcome Pope

LVIV, Ukraine—About a million cheering and singing believers welcomed Pope John Paul II at an open-air Mass Wednesday, the last day of his Ukrainian visit aimed at bringing the Catholics and Orthodox closer together.

The Lviv Hippodrome was a sea of small Ukrainian and Vatican flags as people raised their hands in greeting John Paul's Popemobile making its way slowly to a specially constructed podium.

"You are a million," a priest told the crowd before the Pope arrived. Later, organizers gave an even higher figure, saying up to 1.5 million believers came.

"The visit is a historic event for us," said Marta Baidyian, 16, of Stryi in the western Lviv region. "I'm here to see the Holy Father and this happens once in a lifetime."

Many in the enormous crowd booed and whistled in disapproval when Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma also appeared on the podium. Kuchma's main support base is in the industrial central and eastern regions and he draws much less respect in the largely nationalist west.

Western Ukraine also is the stronghold of Ukrainian Catholics, most of them so-called Greek Catholics who practice Orthodox ritual but bear allegiance to the Pope. Greek Catholic believers faced persecution under both Russian imperial and Soviet rule, and the first papal trip to Ukraine pays tribute to their suffering.

John Paul is to beatify 28 Greek Catholics on Wednesday, including 27 martyrs most of whom were killed by Soviet secret police. Several, according to Church officials, have died horrible deaths, including Father Yakum (Senkivskyi) who was boiled in a cauldron in 1941 while in a Soviet prison.

The Pope's homily at the Eastern Rite Mass was to be devoted to unity between the Catholic and Orthodox churches and his attempts to heal the schism that has divided Christianity for nearly a millennium, the main theme of his trip.

But despite John Paul's efforts, Ukraine's largest, Moscow-linked Orthodox Church as well as Russian Orthodox Church leaders refuse to meet with the Pope, pointing to bitter church property and other disputes between the Orthodox and Catholics in Ukraine.

Russian Orthodox Patriarch Alexy II warned repeatedly that the Pope's visit would bring further religious rifts to the country. Yet those at the Mass flatly dismissed such statements. *AP*

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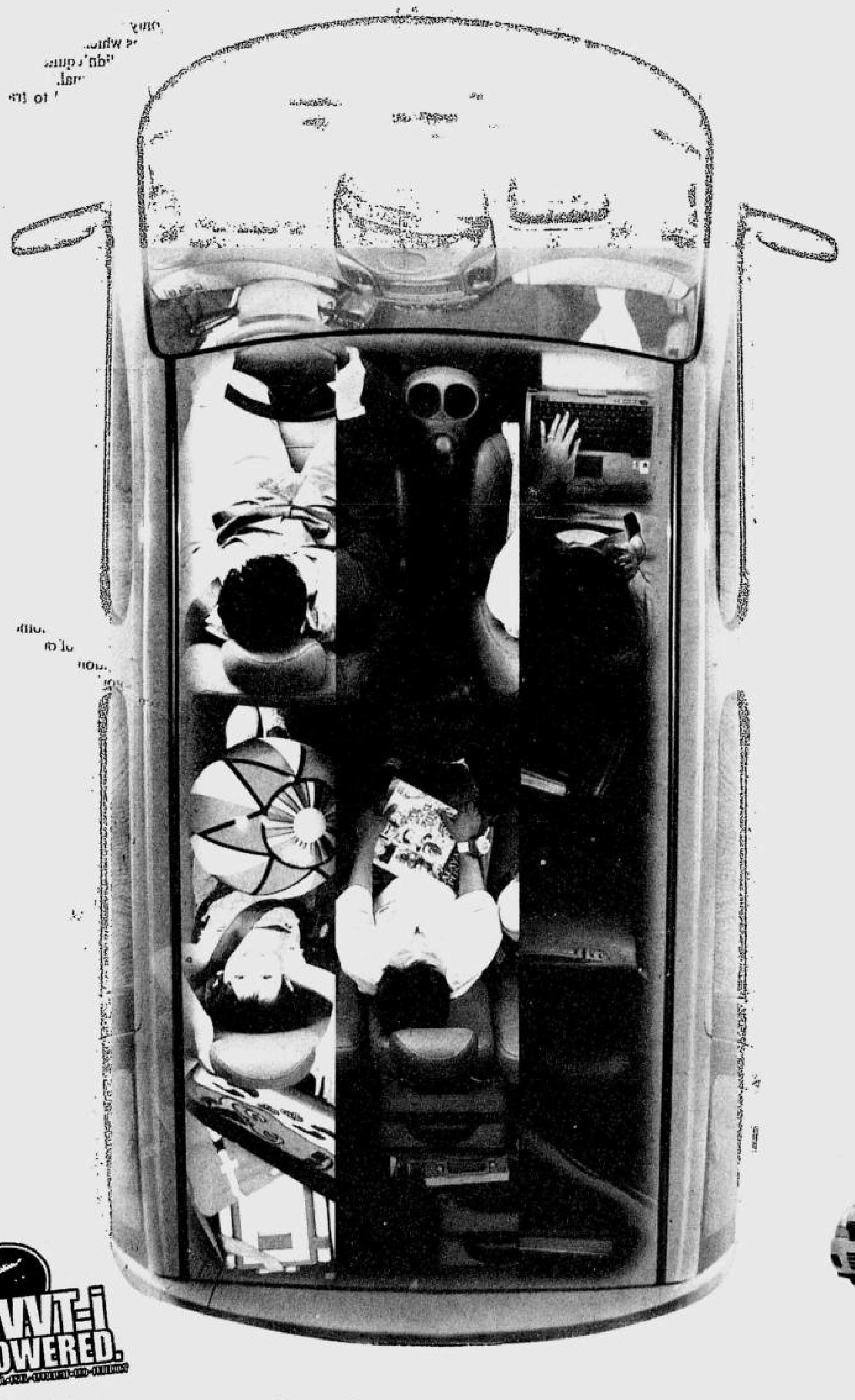

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Quake-stricken Peruvians rally around cathedral

AREQUIPA, Peru—One steeple is toppled and large chunks have fallen from the other. An intricate bell tower lies shattered on the ground. The altar has collapsed, buried under steel beams.

In a city that has been named a world cultural treasure by the United Nations for its architecture, the damaged 17th century Cathedral has become a rallying point for Peruvians digging out after a weekend earthquake that killed 102 people.

Since the 8.1-magnitude temblor, thousands of residents of this Andean highland city have flocked to the imposing stone edifice.

"We Arequipans have a lot of courage and strength," said Jorge Rosada, a vegetable farmer, watching the effort already under way. "I think the entire town is going to recoup its strength—and recover our cathedral."

Church workers wearing smocks and hardhats hauled away debris in wheelbarrows with the help of cadets from Arequipa's police academy.

"It's a top priority for us to restore it," said Mayor Juan Manuel Guillen. "Arequipans are warriors, we don't give up. We're a little beaten up right now, but we will prevail."

Nestled amid the Andes mountains 465 miles southeast of Lima, Arequipa is nicknamed Peru's colonial "White City" because of its brightly colored buildings that sparkle in the sun. Colonial-era mansions line the downtown streets, with Spanish-style courtyards peeking out from behind façades of carved volcanic rock and wooden balconies.

But the city is located in an area prone to earthquakes.

Before Saturday, its residents had suffered through four major quakes—in 1687, 1868, 1858, and 1960. The church, built in 1656 and known simply as the Cathedral, weathered the natural disasters, although suffered extensive damage in 1868. It also survived an 1844 fire.

Luis Manrique, an architect involved in the government's efforts to restore the city's buildings, said every one of the city's 335 historical monuments has been damaged in some way in the quake. At least 20 percent were seriously damaged, he said.

When the quake struck, Arequipa resident Augustin Medina watched in horror as the cathedral's steeple collapsed in a cloud of white dust.

As the earth rumbled, the steeple tumbled backward and crashed through the ceiling of one of the cathedral's side chapels. It sounded like a bomb had exploded, she said.

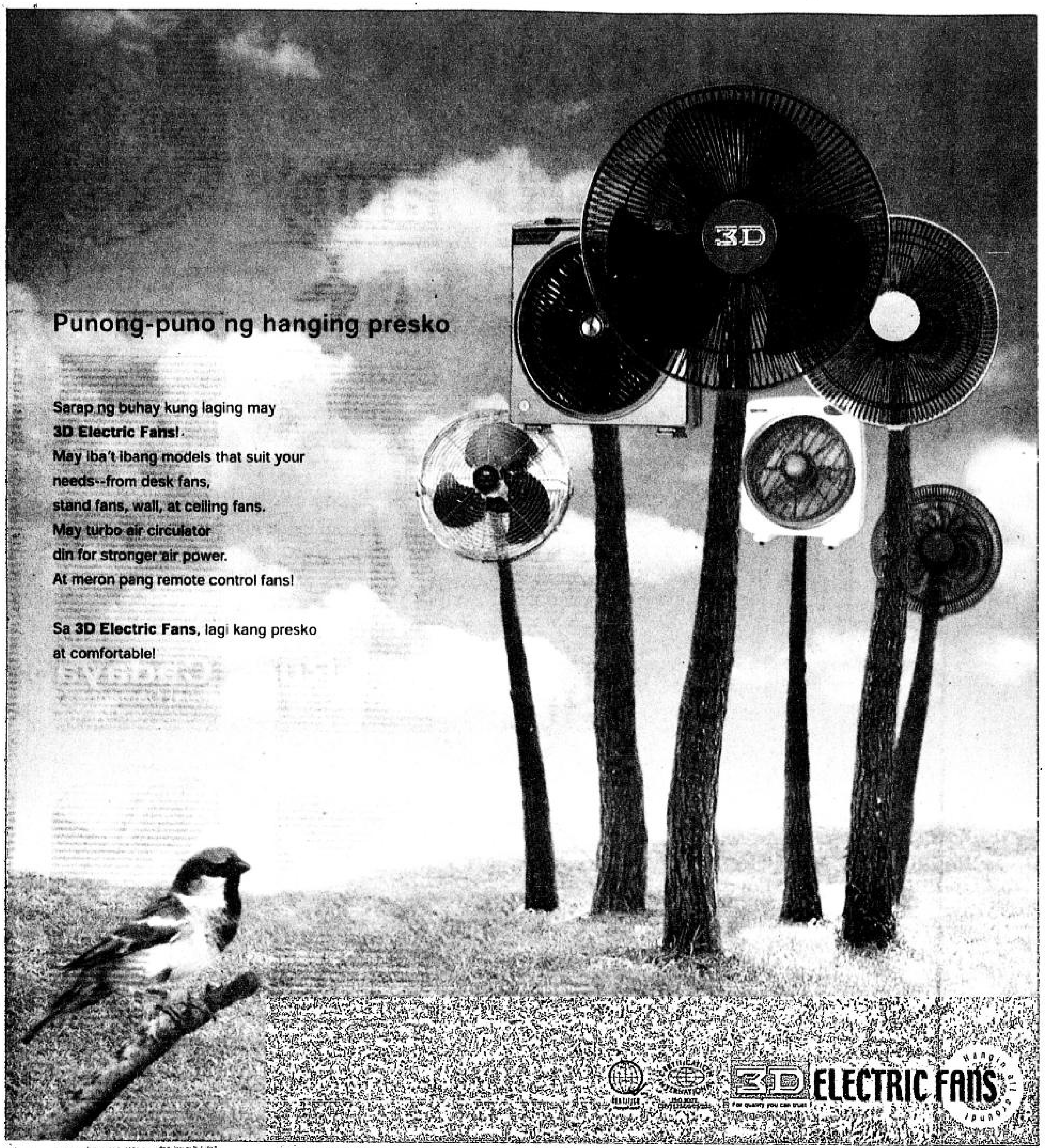
The building is now littered with mounds of shattered stone columns and twisted steel beams. Deep cracks stretch across its walls. The church's three-story organ, made in 1853 of imported wood from Belgium, escaped damage, but a brass lamp from Spain was damaged.

Another gilded church damaged was San Augustin, a block from the main plaza.

San Agustin's Father Juan Meza said engineers were expected to arrive this week to evaluate the damage and draw up restoration plans. "We won't be able to have services inside. It's just too dangerous," he said, fearing aftershocks might jar loose chunks of cement and brick.

Since Saturday, Meza said the church has been celebrating Mass in its floodlit courtyard, where a makeshift altar and electric organ have been set up. The crowds have been thick in recent days.

The mayor estimated the cathedral's restoration will cost around $3 million and take anywhere from six to eight months, depending on how quickly the city can get financial aid. *AP*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Marilao, Bulacan 34 years old

Trinity Pintor
[illegible]
[illegible] Naga City 33 years old

VISAYAS
Joanna P. Empio
[illegible] Bacolod City
19 years old

Vilma F. Infante
[illegible] Bacolod City
Negros Occidental [illegible] years old

MINDANAO
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Aguilar St., Hinigaran
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Pres. Roxas, Capiz 5803
18 years old

LUZON

Editor D. Guiang
23 T. Pasion St.
Laoag City, Ilocos Norte
26 years old

Helen R. Deblois
Capilihan St.
Calauag, Naga City
64 years old

MINDANAO

Edward C. Petras
Sto. Niño Riverside, Km. 9
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23 years old

Lilia dela Torre
Loctugan, Roxas City
Capiz
63 years old

LUZON

Rosalie I. del Barrio
San Felipe, Basud
Camarines Norte
22 years old

Virgilio A. Pugay
Vergon Subd., Cupang
Balanga, Bataan
60 years old

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Army warns Wahid on nat'l emergency

JAKARTA—Indonesia's Army yesterday warned President Abdurrahman Wahid not to declare a state of emergency as a way of avoiding dismissal and said it would protect the national assembly when it convenes his impeachment in August.

Other senior officials and the speaker of parliament also came out against the possibility of an emergency decree.

In a radio interview at the end of a three-day state visit to Australia, Wahid said he might invoke emergency rule and call in the military if the People's Consultative Assembly moves against him.

He said elections could be held within a year and the military would obey him as its top commander.

"They will do anything the supreme commander will order," he told Australian Broadcasting Corp. radio.

However, in Jakarta, Army spokesperson Brig. Gen. Franciscus Bachtiar said the security forces would not close down the assembly, the nation's highest legislative body, saying the military was loyal to the state and would not become "a tool for the government."

"The Army calls on the president not to declare a state of emergency," he said.

Asked if troops would obey an order from Wahid to dissolve the assembly, Bachtiar said: "If the impeachment session goes ahead, we will join with the police and secure the event." *AP*

Wahid not likely to survive impeachment, says NZ leader

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand—As Indonesian President Abdurrahman Wahid arrived yesterday on a state visit, Prime Minister Helen Clark said she didn't expect him to survive upcoming impeachment proceedings.

Wahid arrived in this southern city shortly after midday to a formal state welcome, the first Indonesian president to visit New Zealand since 1972. Wahid faces impeachment hearings in August.

As a military honor guard presented arms in pouring rain, indigenous Maori people in traditional costume performed a ritual greeting. Clark and other senior New Zealand officials greeted Wahid.

In less than diplomatic remarks earlier, Clark said she would be concentrating on officials accompanying the Indonesian leader because they would survive any change of government if Wahid is removed.

"His political future looks difficult right now . . . the balance of probability now is that he won't survive," Clark told National Radio.

"The president probably won't be the president in a little time," Clark added.

She said a civil servants traveling with Wahid would "endure, irrespective of government."

This means issues raised in talks between the two leaders would be taken back to Indonesia's capital Jakarta, Clark said.

Wahid flew to New Zealand for a one-day visit after a state visit to Australia. The Australian visit came some two years after ties between Jakarta and Canberra almost collapsed after Australia led an international peacekeeping force into East Timor after it voted for independence from Indonesia.

New Zealand has a battalion of troops in East Timor on peacekeeping duties as part of a United Nations force.

Clark said a range of matters relating to East Timor, including prosecution of the killer of a New Zealand soldier shot while on peacekeeping patrol, and other human rights issues would be raised with Wahid.

She was not optimistic about quick action from the Indonesian side.

"We do have quite a long list of issues there that don't go away as long as Indonesia doesn't act effectively," she said.

It was "entirely possible" Indonesia would have a new president by the time of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) forum in Shanghai in October, Clark said.

"That being the case we would seek to meet with the new president and press . . . these issues," Clark said.

There were a range of positive developments in the relationship between the two nations, which worked closely in regional bodies, Clark said. A period of stability and prosperity would make Indonesia a very major trading partner for New Zealand, she said.

"They're far from out of the woods yet . . . I don't think we're going to see a lot of stability in the short term" in Indonesia, Clark added. *AP*

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WORLDBRIEFS

Towel scandal

MEXICO CITY—A top aide and very close friend of Mexican President Vicente Fox resigned from the administration Tuesday in a scandal over the purchase of $443 towels and $1,060 sheets—costly items that never even showed up at the president's residence. Carlos Rojas, president of the acquisitions committee for the presidency, resigned along with two others on the committee, while three others were suspended until a government investigation is complete, Comptroller Francisco Barrios said at a news conference. Two other employees implicated in the scandal no longer work for the government. Rojas led fundraising efforts during Fox's campaign and was one of the top aides who helped Fox select his Cabinet before taking office. He was also a very close friend of Fox. *AP*

Second day

BEIJING—Officials from the United Nations and China negotiated yesterday over the fate of seven North Korean asylum-seekers who took refuge in a UN office in Beijing, a UN official said. The seven family members entered the Beijing office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on Tuesday and asked for asylum in South Korea, UNHCR regional chief Colin Mitchell told reporters. The seven—a couple, their two teenage children, two grandparents and a nephew—said they faced persecution if they returned to their homeland. *AP*

AIDS conference

UNITED NATIONS—One after another, African leaders at the UN's first global gathering on HIV/AIDS made emotional pleas for help in ending the devastation wrought by the epidemic, with Nigeria's president warning that entire populations face extinction. Secretary General Kofi Annan opened the three-day special session on Monday by urging world leaders to set aside moral judgments and face the unpleasant facts of a disease that has killed 22 million people and ravaged many of the world's poorest nations. Kenya and Nigeria are each home to more than 2 million HIV patients. In Botswana, more than 20 percent of adults are infected; and in South Africa, AIDS will knock off 17 years of life expectancy by 2005. *AP*

Mideast peace talks

WASHINGTON—President George W. Bush pressed Ariel Sharon to move forward on a US-backed Middle East peace plan, but the Israeli prime minister said violence must end first. "One should not compromise with terror," Sharon said. The White House meeting, a second for Sharon since Bush took office six months ago, highlighted their disagreement over how to proceed with a peace process amid continuing violence. It also reflected the administration's stepped-up role in the Middle East after being accused of neglecting the region early in Bush's term. *AP*

Truth commission

MEXICO CITY—President Vicente Fox said Mexico should create a truth commission to investigate the sins of past governments, but needs to limit the commission's role so it doesn't get mired down in the past. In an interview with executives and directors of The Associated Press on Tuesday, Fox said there are some events—such as the massacre of 45 Indians in Chiapas in 1997—that most Mexicans want investigated, but there are others—such as a 1968 massacre of students in Mexico City—that many may want to let lie. "We should do something that is limited . . . because otherwise it's a mess, and many of these truth commissions have not worked before, have created more problems than they have solved," Fox said, speaking in English. *AP*

Spy trial

TAMPA, Florida—The trial of a retired US Army intelligence officer brought an unprecedented courtroom display of KGB agents and was the first time the secret police's own records were used in trial to convict one of its spies, US prosecutors say. Jurors took less than two hours to convict George Trofimoff, born in Germany to Russian emigres, on a single charge of conspiracy to commit espionage Tuesday. Never before has there been a parade of former Cold War warriors before a US jury, nor has a panel been given access to classified documents for use in their deliberations—had they taken the time to do so. *AP*

Across the NATION

TONY BERGONIA, Assistant Editor

Poverty major cause of abortion

LINGAYEN, Pangasinan—Due to poverty, an increasing number of women in the country are resorting to abortion for the survival of their families, a Commission on Population (Popcom) report here said.

The Popcom's State of the Philippine Population Report (SPPR) 2000 said even religion takes a back seat when women abort their children as the "cost of having another child and the impact of this on the entire family prevailed over religious prohibitions."

Legal prohibition has also very little influence on women, with some women interviewed for the report admitting that they were not aware of any law against abortion.

The SPPR said married women terminate their pregnancies because they already have "too many children."

For unmarried women, the most common reasons for abortion are "unpreparedness, work demands and economic reasons."

Dr. Josefina Francisco, chair of the Pangasinan Provincial Hospital's obstetrics-gynecology department, said 80 percent of women who had abortion in the province admitted that they induced the procedure, saying they did it because they cannot afford to support another baby.

"When we ask them if they wanted the baby, they say no because it would be very difficult for them to keep (the child). This is why we have been counseling women who had abortion to practice family planning instead so they need not resort to the risky procedure anymore," she said.

The Pangasinan Provincial Hospital is a pilot hospital for the prevention of abortion and the management of post-abortion complications project of the EngenderHealth, an international non-government organization that works on making reproductive health services safe, available and sustainable.

Gov. Victor Agbayani asked EngenderHealth, through the Department of Health, to help address the problem in the province.

Since abortion is illegal in the country, it is difficult to obtain accurate figures on induced abortion cases although the DOH estimated in 1994 that one out of four women who had abortion was taken to the hospital.

The SPPR said economic difficulty is a common reason for both married and unmarried women to abort their children. Also common among these women is a pregnancy that is "ill-timed, unplanned and unintended."

Luzviminda Muego, provincial population officer, said contrary to the arguments of critics of the family planning program, "a good family planning program actually intends to prevent abortion."

"Instead of helping women, induced abortion is anti-women. (It) is the fourth leading cause of maternal deaths in the country," she said, citing a DOH study.

"The women seek medical attention only when their lives are already at risk, such as when they continuously bleed or when they suffer from infection," she added.

Yolanda Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Iloilo jail riot ordered investigated

BY MA. DIOSA LABISTE
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Outgoing Iloilo Gov. and congressman-elect Arthur Defensor has ordered the provincial legal office to conduct an investigation of the riot at the Iloilo Rehabilitation Center Monday night.

Defensor, now on his last three days in office, said the findings and recommendations would help incoming governor Niel Tupas introduce changes in the IRC that would prevent a similar incident.

He said administrative sanctions would be recommended against the jail guards who failed to notice breaches in the jail's security procedures.

Tupas said one of his first acts in office would be to appoint a full-time jail warden to replace Quintos, who only spends half the time at the IRC.

Quintos is also the assistant police provincial director of Iloilo.

Quintos said he would also conduct his own investigation, which would focus on jail guards who, he said, failed to check the presence of a 4-year-old boy inside the jail.

Mark Somcio, son of inmate Marlon Somcio, was trapped for 16 hours inside the IRC annex building where 159 inmates staged a riot Monday night.

Mark had been with his farther since Saturday when his mother left him behind after a conjugal visit. The jail allows families to sleep with inmates on weekends but they must leave by Monday morning.

The boy was released about 10:30 a.m. the next day after politicians, police and prison officials donated P6,300 in exchange for the boy's freedom.

The money was to pay part of the P20,000 owed by Marlon and five inmates to their cellmates during gambling.

Quintos said he would also check why jail guards failed to prevent betting inside the IRC that put many inmates into debt. The debts came from losses in *cara y cruz*, wagers and endings of basketball games.

The jail bans the playing of cards and other gambling paraphernalia.

When they have no more money to pay for their gambling losses, inmates endured "*takal*," a form of physical punishment done by beating the indebted inmate in the buttocks using a wooden club.

One hit is equivalent to every peso an inmate owes.

Monday's riot was caused by Marlon's failure to pay his gambling debts to an inmate. The inmates at the annex building were also angered by the decision of jail officials to transfer Marlon and five indebted inmates to the main building.

Reports said Marlon did not pay P160 he lost during a *cara y cruz* game. Instead, he only gave P130 to inmate Jerry Suficiencia who was angered and beat Marlon and prisoner Elger Saclauso, both detained for murder charges.

When jail guard Nicolas Ebalan snatched Marlon and Saclauso, the inmates were enraged and a riot broke out.

New gov vows 25-yr mining ban

CALAPAN CITY—Governor-elect Bartolome Marasigan of Oriental Mindoro has vowed to declare a 25-year moratorium on large-scale mineral exploration in the province, a move compelled by the persistence of a Canadian mining firm to operate on the island.

Marasigan said he would ask the Sangguniang Panlalawigan to pass an ordinance declaring a mining moratorium for 25 years in the province.

"Our development priority focuses mainly on the development of agriculture and agro-industries, ecotourism and biodiversity conservation," he said.

"Sustainable and mining industry development cannot harmoniously co-exist (with the other industries) because of the destructive nature of the latter," said Marasigan, who will assume the highest provincial post on July 1.

The Canadian-owned Aglubang Mining Corporation (AMC) plans to extract nickel and cobalt on a 9,700-hectare land on central Mindoro Island.

The AMC has a mineral production sharing agreement (MPSA) with the national government, which the Department of Environment and Natural Resources reportedly revoked recently.

During Marasigan's term as vice governor, three Sangguniang Panlalawigan resolutions had been passed strongly opposing the $700-million project.

"Contrary to news reports, there is no final decision yet (on) the revocation of the MPSA," said Marasigan.

Early this month, Canadian Ambassador Robert Collette expressed fears that mining operations could have a devastating impact on the island' [illegible] ment.

Marasigan said Collette was con[illegible] d that the planned mining operation of the AM[illegible] estructive to the environment.

Collette, he said, "was surprised to [illegible] there had been stiff opposition to the mining project" and agreed to recommend its cancellation.

Dennis A. Maliwanag, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

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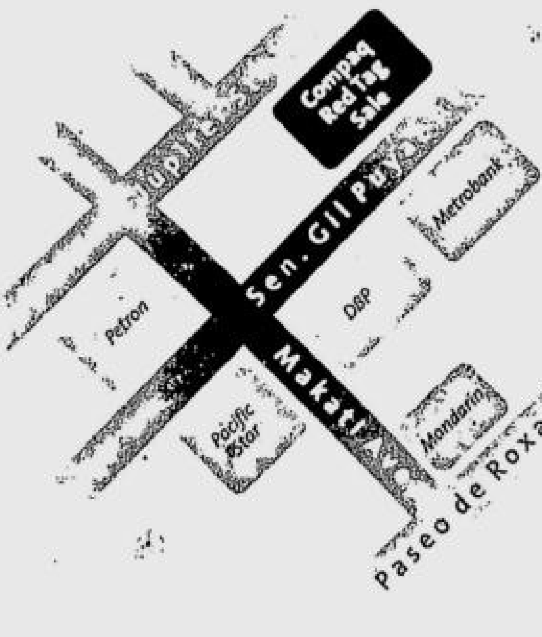

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ABANDONED CHILD'S TALE

Girl survives heart surgery

By Hazel P. Villa
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Surgeons at the Philippine General Hospital successfully closed a blood vessel in the heart of Antonia Precious Marie Jamandre, the 3-year-old girl who is suffering from multiple congenital defects.

This was learned from Mila Abad who accompanied the girl's adoptive mother, Letty, at the PGH while Antonia was being operated on last Monday.

Abad told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview that seven PGH surgeons and pediatric cardiologists operated on the girl to fix her Patent Doctus Arteriosus (PDA), the blood vessel in the heart that remained open after she was born.

The surgery, which started about 1 p.m., took four hours and 15 minutes to finish, she added.

About 5:15 p.m., the doctors emerged from the operating room and announced that the operation was successful.

FILE photo of little Antonia.

About 6 p.m., Abad said Antonia was resting at the recovery room of the PGH together with Letty.

On Tuesday, Abad said the PGH doctors were also looking into her vaginal canal to see the extent of the problem.

"We hope the (surgery) for the vaginal canal will be done before she goes home," said Abad, speaking on behalf of PGH doctors who requested anonymity.

Abandoned at birth at a hospital here, Antonia is suffering from multiple congenital defects.

Aside from problems in the vaginal canal, the girl was diagnosed to have severe to profound hearing loss. She also wears eyeglasses to correct her bad eyesight.

But what scared her mother was when doctors told her that the blood vessel in the girl's heart did not close after she was born. Unless operated on, it might lead to complications that could cost her life.

The surgery, however, was worth at least P150,000, including medicines and post-operative care, way beyond Letty's income as a public school teacher at the Iloilo National High School (INHS) here.

But Good Samaritans responded to Letty's call for help after they were touched by the girl's story published in the INQUIRER Visayas on June 2.

INQUIRER readers facilitated the girl's operation as well as her and her mother's accommodations in Manila and other related expenses.

Abad, a former executive of the Philippine Airlines, coordinated for Antonia, Letty and companion Reynalda Española to be flown to Manila free of charge via Cebu Pacific Airlines on June 8.

The PGH doctors also waived their professional fees while the PGH management gave huge discounts for Antonia's stay at the hospital and her other expenses.

Other Good Samaritans who came to the aid of Antonia were Chit Lijauco who donated P10,000 and 10-year-old student Guillan Rivera Artieda who gave P500 on June 19 to the "Save Antonia" Account at the Equitable Bank (Account No. 0363-01520-4 under the names "Mila Abad/Letty Jamandre").

Instead of lending a 14-inch color TV set to the Jamandres as he said earlier, Cham Tian Kua of Manila gave a brand new Tamashi TV as a gift to Antonia.

He delivered it on June 17 to the house of Lourdes Tangco in Manila where the Jamandres were staying.

Encroachment threatens mountain plants

By Desiree Caluza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet—Environment officials in the province have warned of the possible extinction of medicinal plants and other flora and fauna on Mt. Data with the encroachment of agricultural lands and settlers in the national park.

Leon Apse, community environment and natural resources officer (Cenro) of La Trinidad town, said all scientific discoveries on medicinal plants in Mt. Data will go to waste if its mossy forest will not be preserved.

"There are so many medicinal plants and species of animals that are being disturbed in the area and this area happened to be the most biologically-diverse," Apse told reporters in a forum here.

A 1999 survey of the regional Department of Environment and Natural Resources showed that 71 percent of the protected area of Mt. Data, located between the boundaries of Buguias, Benguet, and Bauko, Mt. Province, had turned into an agricultural and residential area.

Environmental officials said many farmers have been enticed to enter the Mt. Data National Park because of the quality of its soil.

Mt. Data is the source of Northern Luzon's big rivers like the Agno, Chico and Abra rivers.

"Virtually, Mt. Data is supposed to be a national park, but it does not represent (itself) as a national park. We have received reports of (incidents of) *kaingin* (slash-and-burn) farming and the establishment of farms," Godfrey Cawis, a forester of Cenro-Buguias, said.

Among the medicinal plants found in Mt. Data is the mountain yew (*Taxus sumatrana*), said to be a cure for cancer.

The mountain yew was discovered by a team of scientists from the University of the Philippines at Los Baños in the 1950s.

The mossy forest of Mt. Data is also home to different species of pine and oak trees and to the Philippine cloud rat.

Dancio Martinez, Protected Area and Wildlife Services officer of Benguet, said they have no complete inventory of medicinal plants in Mt. Data, adding that there are still species that have yet to be identified and properly catalogued.

Martinez admitted that the Mt. Data National Park is not protected from researchers who enter the protected area to study its flora and fauna.

"We have to accept that we are lax in terms of monitoring those who try to conduct research because the mountain has so many entry points," he said.

Aside from designating forest rangers, Martinez said the DENR has put up additional fences to protect the plateau of Mt. Data from encroachment.

Town mayor survives 5th attempt on his life

PAGADIAN CITY—The town mayor of Dimataling in Zamboanga del Sur cheated death but his police escort was badly wounded after they were ambushed by unidentified armed men on Tuesday afternoon.

The attack was the fifth attempt on the life of Mayor Haniel Baya.

Supt. Samson Ubay-Ubay, operations chief of the provincial police, said Baya was on board a motorcycle driven by his escort, SP02 Ramon Yap Jr., when the attack occurred a few kilometers from the Dimataling town hall.

Yap suffered serious gunshot wounds but doctors at the Margosatubig Regional Hospital yesterday declared him out of danger.

Police investigators suspect the gunmen were the same ones who staged at least four attacks against Baya in the past but they refused to confirm if politics had anything to do with it.

The INQUIRER learned that the mayor was locked in a long-standing feud with some influential residents in Dimataling.

Authorities said they are also checking reports that former members of the Moro National Liberation participated in Tuesday's failed attempt on the mayor's life.

Reports also indicated that former NPA guerrillas and members of cults in the town identified with Baya have started to hunt down individuals they suspect of taking part in the plot against the mayor's life.

This led the police and the military to implement tighter security measures and to deploy contingents to avert a possible escalation of violence. *Hernan dela Cruz, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Maid jailed in UAE needs 'blood money'

DAVAO CITY—The Filipino community in Dubai is trying to raise funds for blood money for Filipina maid Mary Jane Ramos who was jailed in the United Arab Emirates for killing her employer who tried to rape her.

Earlier, Amable Aguiluz III, the country's ambassador to the United Arab Emirates, said donation boxes have been put up in the Embassy and the labor offices in Abu Dhabi and in Dubai for the purpose.

At least 150,000 dirhams, or about P2.1 million, is needed for Ramos' liberty.

Ramos, a domestic helper from Isabela, Cagayan, was imprisoned in 1999 after she killed her employer who attempted to rape her.

A Sharia' Court absolved Ramos of the crime after she spent two years in jail. Ramos was about to be freed when the family of her slain employer appealed to a higher court.

The Appellate Court in Ras Al Khaimah found Ramos guilty of murder and sentenced her to a two-year prison term and the payment of a *diya* or blood money to her employer's family.

The appellate court, taking notice of the maid's imprisonment since 1999, decreed that she could already be released after the blood money is paid.

But the maid's family already lost hope they could raise the needed amount because of poverty.

Ambassador Aguiluz was quoted by the Khaleej Times, a UAE-based on-line publication, as saying on Monday that the Philippine Embassy in Abu Dhabi had received inquiries from Filipinos who wanted to help Ramos.

"We have been receiving calls from Filipinos from as far as Fujairah and Al Ain expressing their willingness to help Mary Jane. We have also received calls from Manila, particularly one from ABS-CBN (a Manila-based TV network)," Aguiluz was quoted as saying. *Allan A. Nawal, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Arrest order issued for ex-mayor

SANTIAGO CITY—The National Bureau of Investigation and the police are hunting former Mayor Jose Miranda Sr. after an arrest warrant was issued Monday in connection with the double murder charges filed against him.

Joint law enforcement teams from the NBI led by lawyer Constantino Joson and the 133rd provincial police mobile group led by Supt. Renato Turingan went to Miranda's house in Dubinan West here on Monday but failed to locate the former mayor.

At least 1,000 supporters of Miranda massed in front of his house during the raid.

Miranda was in Manila on Tuesday, reports said.

His son, Jose Jr., complained to police that he lost his P100,000-worth gold ring after the raid.

Judge Wilfredo Tumaliuan of the Santiago City regional trial court issued the arrest warrant against Miranda in connection with the murder of Elizer Tuliao and Vicente Bauzon five years ago.

Their bodies were found charred in Barangay Purok-ni-Bulan in Ramon town on March 7, 1996.

The killings were linked to "jueteng" operations in the city. *Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The whole country will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms.

source: pagasa

Metro Manila Hi 32° Lo 24°	Baguio Hi 24° Lo 16°	Tuguegarao Hi 32° Lo 23°
Laoag Hi 32° Lo 23°	Clark Zone Hi 32° Lo 23°	Tagaytay Hi 30° Lo 22°
Legazpi Hi 29° Lo 23°	Bacolod Hi 3° Lo 24°	Roxas Hi 30° Lo 24°
Cebu Hi 31° Lo 24°	Tacloban Hi 30° Lo 24°	Gen. Santos Hi 32° Lo 24°
Zamboanga Hi 32° Lo 26°	Cagayan de Oro Hi 32° Lo 22°	Davao Hi 31° Lo 24°

Compiled by: Armin P. Adina, PDI Research

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Bid pushed to free OFW from Saudi jail

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—Local officials here are rushing documents that would speed up the release of a Filipino worker from a Saudi Arabia jail.

Genaro Basilio Jr., coordinator of the Assistance Council for Vizcayano Overseas Workers, said the necessary documents are being prepared to facilitate the release of Felipe Morales Jr. of Barangay Ibung in Villaverde town.

"All what is needed is a certification translated in Arabic, which will be authenticated by the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Saudi foreign ministry in Jeddah and this is now being processed," he said.

Morales' family has sought the assistance of council officials here after his employer refused to shoulder the amount for his release.

Morales, who was working at the Ministry of Agriculture and Water in Abha, Saudi Arabia, was held responsible by the Shariah court for the death of a Yemeni in a vehicular accident on June 19 last year.

He was jailed at the Khamus prison central in Saudi Arabia after a court ordered him to pay 75,000 riyals or P1.12 million in blood money to the Yemeni's heirs.

"They have no property to compensate for the amount, so this is being done to convince the court that he cannot shoulder the amount," Basilio said.

Officials here also soug[illegible] of Consul General Kadatu[illegible] of the Philippine consulate in [illegible] Saudi Arabia, in the translati[illegible] Morales' certification in Arabic. *B[illegible] Moses Ebreo, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Killing revives ethnic divisions

By C. Arzadon
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

ADAMS, Ilocos Norte—Residents paid their last respects to the town's youth leader on Sunday in burial rites fit for a local hero.

With the interment of Elvenido Ravelo, 26, the slain Sangguniang Kabataan president of the town, came the resurgence of what could have been a deep-seated animosity that has long divided the community of Ilocanos, Igorots and Yapayaos (Apayao).

Ravelo, a half Ilocano-Yapayao, was regarded as a young leader who had been working in dissolving the tribal divide.

Ravelo's mother Albertina, a pure Yapayao, did not hide her contempt against the *lallakay* (village elders) whom she accused of having a hand in the murder of her son.

"I don't know what their motives are. But I have information that the *lallakay* discussed among themselves about this (killing)," she said.

Albertina said her son had once complained about his non-acceptance by the community as a Yapayao leader because of his Ilocano bloodline.

She said the Yapaynos only wanted one from their own to hold power. Most of the leaders who held official posts belong to the Yapayao tribe. The incumbent mayor is a Yapayao.

"If there was anyone who was keen on unifying the three tribes, it was my son," she said.

"But if this (conflict) does not end, I will lead the road to the dissolution of Yapayao as a tribe even if I suffer the same fate as my son's," she told town officials and relatives who gathered at the town plaza for her son's burial.

Despite the filing of charges against three suspects in the murder, the national Sangguniang Kabataan Federation has offered a P50,000-reward for anyone who can give information on Ravelo's murder.

Union cleared in bombing

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—A ranking official of the Yellow Bus Lines (YBL) here debunked police claims that a "management-labor dispute" could be the reason behind a recent bomb attack on the bus firm's private terminal in nearby Koronadal City.

Dan Genez, a YBL supervisor assigned at the Bulaong terminal here, told reporters that the bus firm's employees could not be behind the early dawn bomb attack on the YBL terminal on Sunday.

Two YBL buses were heavily damaged when at least two of three improvised bombs went off.

Police recovered an unexploded bomb in one of the buses parked inside the terminal.

Genez said YBL workers are not likely to resort to violence despite a deadlock in the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) negotiations between the YBL management and the workers' union.

"In my 15 years of service, I never heard about or seen violent workers in this company. They are law-abiding and peace-loving workers," Genez said.

Also, the YBL management supported Genez's statement saying the attack was done by the NPA.

The South Cotabato-based Valentine Palamine Command of the New People's Army has already owned up the bombing saying YBL is being punished for the continued refusal of its management to pay revolutionary taxes. *Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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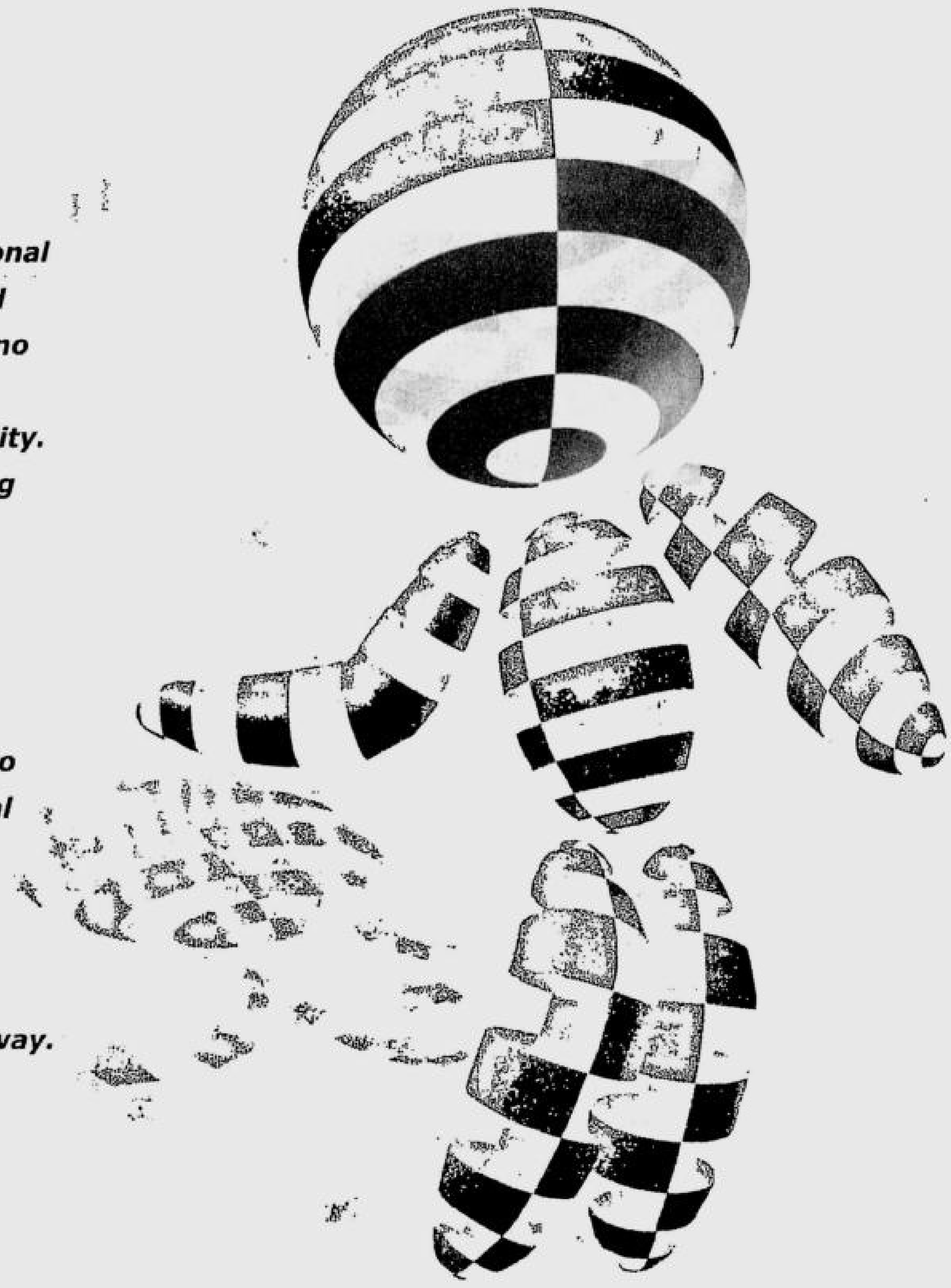

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EVENT SCHEDULE

28 June

9:30 - 10:30 a.m. — **Opening Ceremony**
Government Employees Briefing and Guided Tour
9:30 a.m. -12:00 noon — **Developing and Executing an E-Procurement Strategy** by Arthur Andersen**
Enabling e-Business in the Philippines by Globe Telecom**
2:00 - 5:00 p.m. — **Mobile Internet- Profit from It** by Ericsson**
The Future of B2B by Sesami.com **
2:30 p.m. — **Launching of E-Filing System** by Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR)
4:00 p.m. — **Launching of Mod.Net** by Mosaic Communications
Making Every Peso Count and Tax Computerization Program by BIR
7:00 p.m. — **Opening Reception** by invitation only

29 June

9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. — **iPlanet** by Sun Microsystems**
10:00 a.m. — **Launching of Secrets of E-Commerce Book** by PTTC and ITC
12:00 noon — **Ethics in IT Forum** by Thames Intl. Bus. School
1:30 p.m — **Launching of HRMS** by Geodata
3:00-4:00 p.m. — **Presentation of DOST's IT Search Winners**
E-Procurement System by DBM
6:00-10:00 p.m. — **Networking Night** by the Digital Filipino

30 June

10:00 am. -12:00 noon — **Turn Your Creativity into Cash** by Electromedia Publications
Breakthrough in Democracy: Automating Phil. Elections by NAMFREL
1:30 - 4:30 p.m. — **Technical Paper Presentations** by Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers

*** Organized by Knowledge Institute*

[illegible]

28 June 10:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. Trade Visitors/ Government officials & employees
29 June 10:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. Trade Visitors/ Government officials & employees
2:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Students (High School/College)
30 June 10:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m. General Public

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Estrada arraigned: historic but routine

(From page A1)

refusal to plead as not guilty.

Estrada, waved and smiled as he entered the courtroom accompanied by his wife, Senator-elect Luisa "Loi" Ejercito, and two of his sons, Jude and JV.

When the former President was seated in the second-floor courtroom, his expression turned more serious. His face was lit up repeatedly by the flashes of photographers frantically working to capture the historic moment.

Asked by a television reporter how he felt, Estrada said: "I'm OK except for my eyes." He has said he needs surgery for a worsening eye condition.

No to hospital trial

Earlier in the day, the Sandiganbayan also rejected anew a last-minute plea by the Philippine National Police to switch the venue of the deposed president's trial to the military hospital where he is being detained.

Garchitorena said he was not convinced by the police arguments that having Estrada tried at the Sandiganbayan building would expose him to possible assassination and result in massive street protests.

The justice also denied the defense bid to have the perjury case quashed, saying that the information filed by government lawyers was "clear enough" concerning the supposed "untruths" involved when the former leader filed his statement of assets and liabilities in 2000.

The first division, which Garchitorena chairs, also denied a bid by both the prosecution and defense panels to have the case consolidated with the plunder case filed before the third division.

Separate and distinct

The court said that the act of hiding ill-gotten wealth was an act separate and distinct from the act of amassing wealth.

"This court is not persuaded that the perjury (case) must be integrated or form part of plunder," Garchitorena said in his verbal order.

"The court reiterates that the information is clear enough on the supposed untruths in the statement of assets and liabilities," he added.

In the same hearing, Garchitorena told both parties that Estrada would be addressed as "Mr. President" during the trial.

But he stressed that this should not be misinterpreted as a "footnote" to the Supreme Court decision that legitimized the Macapagal administration months earlier.

He said that this was being done out of "courtesy," noting that past presidents like Fidel Ramos and Corazon Aquino were still being addressed as "President."

'Step closer to freedom'

Vice President Teofisto Guingona called the arraignment "routine" and saying only worthy causes should stir public reaction.

"There is no cause for any belligerent action," Guingona said, despite President Macapagal-Arroyo's repeated warning last week of destabilization plots against her government timed to coincide with Estrada's appearance in court.

"For a hostile act, you need a worthy cause, and in this case you don't have one," Guingona said.

Many have called the arraignment a step closer to jail for Estrada, but one of his lawyers, Raymond Fortun, said: "Actually, he is a step closer to freedom. It will be a day in history where a president who's being charged for the first time is also going to be acquitted."

8 minutes of fame

Though the arraignment itself was anticlimactic, Estrada's earlier trip from the Veterans' Memorial Medical Center was anything but ordinary.

It was exactly eight minutes of fame again for the disgraced President, who was escorted to the anti-graft court yesterday by the longest and perhaps most expensive security convoy for a former president.

It was shown on live television, in aerial footage reminiscent of former American football star O.J. Simpson's ride down the Los Angeles freeway after his ex-wife was killed.

Estrada made it in time for his arraignment even though the Philippine National Police encountered several problems in figuring out how to get him to court.

Escorting Estrada were 26 vehicles, excluding nine motorcycles that cleared traffic from the hospital on North Avenue to the Sandiganbayan Centennial Building on Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City. Two choppers hovered over the convoy on the way to court.

The Metro Manila Development Authority and PNP-Traffic Management Group closed the Elliptical Road half an hour before Estrada's convoy left the VMMC during a heavy downpour.

Many of those who lined the streets to watch the convoy said they were simply irritated by the monstrous traffic jams.

Parents fetching their children from the nearby Commonwealth Elementary School complained about what they deemed was the PNP's overreaction to security threats.

Other commuters who were stranded as they watched the convoy slither smoothly from the hospital to the court, could only wait in the rain while everyone was compelled to stop to make way for the long line of official vehicles.

Estrada left the hospital at 2:31 p.m. and arrived at the Sandiganbayan at 2:39 p.m.

Exasperated

The media and the police operatives guarding the Sandiganbayan and the VMMC were initially exasperated by the indecision of the PNP top brass on how to transport Estrada to court. The schedule and announced means of transportation changed almost every hour due to the errant weather.

Two choppers had been sent to the VMMC to pick up the ousted President before lunchtime but the heavy rains forced authorities to opt for the more complicated road trip.

"This is too much preparation for one man's appearance in court," said one of the hundreds of policemen stationed at the VMMC checkpoints. "Just imagine what it would be like if we had to do this everyday during trial."

Riot police detailed at the Sandiganbayan heaved a sigh of relief as Estrada and the PNP security personnel left the building after waving to his supporters.

"*Hay, sa wakas, makakauwi na rin,*" said a rookie policeman who had been keeping watch over the Sandiganbayan gates for the past few days.

Fizzled in rain

Even the protests fizzled in the rain. Only a handful of pro- and anti-Estrada demonstrators turned out, and the former President was able to shake hands with well-wishers before he was returned to the military hospital where he is being detained.

The pro-Estrada mob that stormed Malacañang on May 1 did not gather again for their disgraced hero. Only some 40 Erap supporters showed up at the anti-graft court. And two of them fell prey to snatchers.

Truncheon-wielding policemen guarded the Sandiganbayan, while PNP Special Action Force members in camouflaged uniforms ringed the anti-graft court's inner perimeter with their bomb-sniffing dogs.

The police had to move quickly around 9 a.m. after 60 anti-Estrada protestors from the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan and Plunder Watch showed up near the front steps of Sandiganbayan.

Besides pressing for a speedier trial of the former President, Plunder Watch convenor Fr. Joe Dizon also batted for media coverage of the trial and arrest of Estrada's cronies.

"We are very much committed in the prosecution of Estrada and his cohorts. We hope there will be no more unjust delays nor more extraordinary privileges for the accused," said Dizon.

Snatchers

When the police eventually pushed them to the side, the protestors played cat and mouse with the troops as they tried again and again to get near the court building, until they were finally pushed across Commonwealth Avenue around 2 p.m.

The protestors dispersed after Estrada's convoy arrived around 2:40 p.m.

Two jeeploads of Estrada supporters from San Juan arrived at the court around 3:20 p.m.

Mercedes Castro, 40, said she and her neighbors went to Sandiganbayan to show their support for the former President and press for a "fair trial."

They were outraged when asked if they had been paid to go to the court.

"We were not paid! How could we be paid when he (Estrada) is in jail!" they shouted.

Unlike the mob that tried to storm Malacañang Palace on May 1, the Estrada supporters were not aggressive and even seemed relaxed as they tried to get a glimpse of their idol.

They voluntarily withdrew from the front of the Sandiganbayan after the police asked them to do so.

The bag of barangay volunteer Tess Jimenez, 40, of Ermitano, San Juan, was slashed open by a man in his late 20s during a scuffle with policemen.

Luckily, she got back her wallet after the snatcher fled and dropped it.

However, Vangie Dilao, 48, of San Andres, Malate, Manila was not as lucky. Somebody took her wallet, which contained P160, her ATM cards, and her company ID card during the confusion.

P455T to guard Erap

The cash-strapped police said they spent P455,110 just to secure the Sandiganbayan for the arraignment yesterday.

The money, according to the PNP, was spent on 300 liters of gasoline, bus rentals, rentals of 20 portable toilets and subsistence allowance for 3,537 policemen and soldiers.

Around P315,000 was spent to hire 30 buses to transport policemen.

The PNP also said it deployed 5,182 personnel to beef up security in various places in Metro Manila like Malacañang and the Veterans Memorial Medical Center.

The troop deployment during the arraignment was 2,792 policemen and traffic aides for the Sandiganbayan, 650 policemen for Malacañang, 580 for VMMC and a reserve force of 1,160.

No crossing of legs

But for photographers and cameramen, security was the least of their worries.

The court had earlier given cameramen several minutes to take their shots before the arraignment. Once the arraignment and the hearing started, they were ushered out of the room.

Several cameramen positioned themselves outside the glass doors to get shots during the hearing.

But an Associated Press photographer, Tim Alipalo, 35, positioned himself in an area reserved for those entering the courtroom—an act that got him cited for contempt.

Alipalo was released after two hours, but another photographer, Randy Hormillosa of the INQUIRER, was detained for five minutes when he was caught photographing the deposed President inside a waiting room in the Sandiganbayan.

Garchitorena strictly enforced the rules of court, to the point that one woman was told she could not cross her legs during the proceedings.

A brief scuffle also broke out between cameramen and photographers as they jostled for choice positions during the arraignment.

No one was hurt. ***With reports from Martin P. Marfil, Blanche Rivera, Philip Tubeza; Inquirer wires***

AFP sees 'decisive battle' vs Abus in next few days

(From page A1)

spokesperson of the AFP Southern Command, said at least four Abu Sayyaf members were killed in the clash late Tuesday night with Scout Rangers in Camalaran, Isabela.

A soldier, identified as Sgt. Florante Botac, was wounded in the clash.

The bandits killed were identified only as Akmad, Latip, Halipa and Hangga. Adan reported that six other Abu Sayyaf men were wounded.

According to Adan, the gunmen engaging soldiers of the 103rd Brigade comprise the "main body of the Abu Sayyaf."

This group is believed led personally by Abu Sayyaf chieftain Khadaffy Janjalani and spokesperson Abu Sabaya, and holding the six remaining Dos Palmas hostages, including American missionary couple Martin and Garcia Burnham.

But no sighting of the hostages was reported, the Associated Press quoted Servando as saying.

"Our troops are pushing and pushing so we can engage (the bandits) decisively," Adan said.

Brig. Gen. Cliserio Sua, the new commander of the Joint Task Force Comet, told reporters in Zamboanga that the military was closing in on the bandits.

Supply officer

The military's confidence also appears to be buoyed by certain developments in the campaign against the Abu Sayyaf.

A suspected supply officer of the bandit group, Jose Wong, also known as Abdullah Mustafa Amil, was shot and badly wounded by police yesterday morning in Isabela.

Wong was driving his tricycle in Mabaraka Village, Barangay Aguada, when shot after allegedly resisting arrest.

The AP said he was brought to the Southcom hospital in Zamboanga.

Wong, 45, has a P1-million prize on his head, police said. A convert to Islam, he is now a religious scholar (*ustadz*) and maintains a sideline as a tricycle driver.

Servando also said the military had received reports of what he described as a "welcome development."

He said "infighting" was brewing among the Abu Sayyaf leaders as a result of the supposed plan of the Sulu-based Galib Andang alias Commander Robot to surrender to the government.

"The group in Sulu is reportedly not on good relations with the group based in Basilan (and led by Janjalani and Sabaya)," Servando said.

He said Sabaya could not accept the idea of Andang's supposed surrender plan as this was against the Abu Sayyaf's principles.

Servando also claimed that some members of the bandit group were becoming interested in the government's offer of bounty for information leading to the capture of their leaders.

Letters

An alleged emissary yesterday showed the INQUIRER two letters purportedly sent by two Dos Palmas hostages to their respective families.

The letters contained requests that ransom money be raised for the hostages' release.

One of the letter-writers pleaded with a sister to raise P20,000 for her release. The other assured a brother-in-law that she was "safe and fine," but urged that the issue of ransom be settled.

The letters, scribbled on one-fourth sheets of intermediate-school paper, were supposedly received by the emissary at dawn yesterday in Isabela City through an Abu Sayyaf courier.

"God willing, all the Dos Palmas hostages except for the Burnham couple and the two nurses (taken from the Lamitan hospital) will be freed once everything is fine and quiet in the battle zone," the emissary said.

As for Dos Palmas hostage Lalaine Chua, the emissary said she had yet to be freed "because of the intense military operations."

He also said the Abu Sayyaf was still waiting for the "missing" P1.4-million ransom for Chua, which was supposedly brought earlier by a female courier.

The administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo has consistently maintained a no-ransom policy *vis-a-vis* the latest hostage crisis.

Basilan residents, as well as political and religious leaders in the province, are reported disgusted by the military's performance so far. The residents are resorting to arming themselves to defend their communities.

Adan, however, is looking at the bright side. And the national leadership has shown no outward signs of being displeased with the way the military has handled the crisis.

"We've made contact high up in the clouds over difficult terrain," Adan said.

Since the military operations started, the government has lost 16 soldiers, policemen and civilian volunteers. A total of 58 others have been wounded.

The Abu Sayyaf has 11 dead and another 11 wounded.

Of the civilians caught in the crossfire, three have been killed and 10 wounded.

Advisories

The governments of Japan and the United States have issued advisories cautioning their nationals on travel to the Philippines.

The advisories were posted in the websites of the two countries' embassies in the Philippines.

American and Japanese nationals were cautioned against traveling to the Philippines, particularly to Southern Mindanao.

On Monday, the Australian government issued a similar advisory to its nationals.

In a press statement, Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon urged the local tourism industry to "counter the negative impact of travel advisories with positive action."

Gordon said travel advisories "are to be taken for what they are."

"These are given to advise travelers to exercise diligence in coming to places where possible danger exists," Gordon said.

He said that while he respected the sovereign right of foreign countries to issue such advisories, they should be "more circumspect" in doing so.

"With one ill-advised travel advisory, Philippine tourism dipped to new lows beginning last year," Gordon said. ***With a report from Rocky Nazareno***

'We are not ready . . .

(From page A1)

pendent on the outcome of a Supreme Court decision on the plunder case, according to the legal experts.

In other words, if the Supreme Court found that the plunder charge was unconstitutional, then the related perjury charge would not stand on its own.

The perjury charge relates to Estrada declaring assets of about P35.8 million, with state prosecutors claiming he amassed a P1.117-billion fortune during his 30 months in office.

The wealth he allegedly accumulated through bribes, embezzlement and other acts, forms the basis of the plunder charge.

He is also charged with illegal use of an alias by taking an assumed name to hide his unexplained wealth.

'Confusing'

Estrada's lawyers, led by Saguisag, noted that while he has been charged with perjury, the amended information filed against him by government prosecutors alleges that he violated another law, Republic Act No. 6713, requiring public officials to declare their assets and liabilities.

Saguisag told Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice Francis Garchitorena that the information sheet was "confusing" because the prosecutors seemingly charged Estrada with another crime.

Saguisag told Garchitorena that the discrepancy between criminal charge and amended information prevented defense lawyers from explaining to Estrada the consequences of entering one plea or another during his arraignment.

"We cannot tell our client (what) he is being prosecuted for. The caption mentions the Revised Penal Code (which discusses perjury) but the body (of the complaint) mentions the special law (on SAL)," Saguisag said.

But Garchitorena remained unfazed by Saguisag's tirade and decided to proceed with the arraignment.

Garchitorena dismissed the lawyer's statements on the discrepancy between the perjury charge and the amended information.

Necessary

He said that while the information against Estrada discusses the SAL law, it does not say that this is the law that the former president violated.

Rather, the truthfulness of Estrada's SAL is being questioned, Garchitorena stressed.

Estrada "is not being charged under RA 6713, but the truthfulness of (his SAL) is required by law," Garchitorena said.

He added that the reference to RA 6713 in the amended information "is necessary because (Estrada) has the obligation to tell the truth as required by law under Article 183 of the Revised Penal Code" or the provision on perjury.

Based on the amended information filed by prosecutors, Estrada filed a statement of assets and liabilities on April 28, 2000 reporting his net worth at P35,862,739.97 as of Dec. 31, 1999.

The document added that Estrada's business interests were limited to only three ventures: JELP Real Estate and Development Corp., JE Inc. and Feluisa Development Corp.

However, prosecutors alleged in the amended information that Estrada failed to declare at least five more business interests, namely Valhalla Resources Co., Becks Resources Co., KB Space Holdings Co., Verdant Resources Co. and VFC Realty and Development Corp.

Assets

Prosecutors alleged in their previous information that Estrada also failed to declare liquid assets worth P1,117,185,811 "more or less," as well as "various corporate holdings and connections" in St. Peters Holding Corp., Erap Muslim Youth Foundation Inc. and Fountainbleau Inc.

These details were deleted in the amended information, although prosecutors said they would still submit bank documents proving the existence of Estrada's alleged undeclared assets.

Following court rules, Garchitorena entered a plea of "not guilty" for the ex-President. *(Story on Page A1.)*

One of Estrada's lawyers, Raymond Parsifal Fortun, was interviewed by reporters at the Sandiganbayan before the afternoon arraignment.

When asked if Estrada would enter a "not guilty" plea, Fortun answered: "It would really be shocking if he would say otherwise. He will enter his plea." ***With Inquirer wires***

Millionaires club in government listed

(From page A1)

and salaries of the president, chair, chief executive officers, members of the board and trustees and down to executive vice presidents of 71 government-owned and controlled corporations (GOCCs) and government financial institutions (GFIs).

She also ordered the heads of the GOCCs and GFIs to submit to her a pay rationalization plan within a month so that the "severe pay imbalance" between officials of these agencies and the rest of the bureaucracy could be corrected.

Based on a study conducted on orders of the President, it was found out that the annual salary and benefits of CEOs and presidents of various GOCCs and GFIs range from a "low" of P691,760 to a high of P10.9 million. Deputy chief executive officers and executive vice presidents receive between P595,960 and P5.8 million while other senior officers like vice presidents and senior vice presidents get anywhere from P545,734 to P2.9 million.

The equivalent level of these senior GOCC officers is a department undersecretary, who gets a total of P630,300 in annual salary and benefits.

Not true

"That's not true. I don't know where they got those figures but they are not true," De Leon told the INQUIRER by phone.

She said her basic monthly pay was P40,000 and her accumulated benefits only P4,415.

But officials of the Department of Budget and Management's Organization, Position, Classification and Compensation Bureau stood by the figures.

They said these were official data from the Commission on Audit's post-audit and submissions by the GOCCs and GFIs themselves.

The excessive pay scale was discovered in a study conducted by the DBM OPCCB.

Though the DBM OPCCB conducted only an "initial study" covering 24 GOCCs and subsidiaries, which are not covered by the Salary Standardization Law (SSL), its findings prompted the President to issue Memorandum Order No. 20 on June 25 suspending increases in salaries and benefits of GOCC and GFI executives, which are exempted from, or not following, the SSL.

She also ordered the heads of these agencies to submit to her a pay rationalization plan within one month so that the "severe pay imbalance" between officials of these agencies and the rest of the bureaucracy could be corrected.

Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin said the reduction of the salary and benefits could be done by the GOCCs and GFIs themselves. Final approval would come from the President.

Boncodin explained that labor laws, including those prohibiting diminution of pay, did not apply to the government, whose employees and officials receive more than the minimum wage.

Employees demand increase

After Malacañang disclosed the "confidential" multimillion-peso salaries of top government executives, government employees renewed their call for a P3,000 across-the-board salary increase to correct what they call "the injustice committed in the past years."

The Confederation for Unity, Recognition and Advancement of Government Employees (Courage), yesterday lamented that while government executives were enjoying "atrocious" remuneration, rank-and-file employees were getting a measly monthly salary of as low as P4,840.

Reacting to the President's order, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura, who receives a total of P3.683 million yearly, said he was open to a review of the BSP compensation package.

"We welcome a review of everybody's compensation including our own," said Buenaventura.

Based on data from the DBM, the BSP governor's deputies earn P2.097 million yearly.

Preliminary data obtained by the INQUIRER showed that the PCSO chair's P10.9 million income includes an annual basic pay of P440,000 and "other compensation and benefits" amounting to P10,496,272. These other benefits include P5 million in intelligence fund and P4.7 million in discretionary fund.

Denial

De Leon issued a statement to deny the report.

But at P40,000 a month, De Leon's admitted basic salary would still amount to P480,000 a year, which is a little bigger than the data obtained by the DBM.

De Leon said her "accumulated monthly allowances are only P4,515" or P52,980 yearly.

She could not explain where the DBM obtained the P10.5 million in other compensation and benefits the PCSO chair is entitled to based on the PCSO charter.

"These are the remuneration that were inherited and in place before the new PCSO officials assumed their posts," she pointed out.

"We at the PCSO all serve at the pleasure of the President and we are bound to follow what she requires," she said in a statement.

"However, we wish to correct the wrong impression that we receive salaries as high as those mentioned in the INQUIRER," she said.

In a phone interview with the INQUIRER, De Leon admitted she had other benefits, including intelligence and discretionary funds but declined to say how much.

But she said she was using these funds for assistance to indigents whose needs are urgent and could not wait for the normal bureaucratic processes.

But an official of the DBM OPCCB said the bureau could not have been wrong.

"Those are official documents coming from COA, which in turn got submissions from the GOCCs themselves," said the official who declined to be named.

The GSIS president's annual basic pay is P4,283,748 and the total compensation and benefits are worth P2,227,339 for a total of P6.5 million.

Huge bonus for GSIS head

The GSIS official's benefits include a year-end bonus of P723,958, Rata (representation allowance) of P384,444, P1 million in provident fund, P21,000 in food allowance and P15,000 in medical benefits.

The GSIS president's basic pay is much higher than the President's P660,000 annual basic pay and the Vice President's P528,000.

A department secretary receives P927,900 a year, including a basic pay of P462,000 and other benefits. An undersecretary gets P630,000 including P330,000 basic pay, a department assistant secretary gets P536,651 including P289.524 basic pay and a bureau director gets P502,176 including P278,377 basic pay.

Boncodin explained the President's order was not intended to "bring them (GOCCs) down" but to ensure that the pay scale would be competitive without being very far from the equivalent positions in the national government.

The 14 GOCCs and GFIs, which have high salaries and benefits, are:

Bases Conversion Development Authority, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, GSIS, SSS, Home Guaranty Corp., Land Bank of the Philippines, Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp., Philippine Health Insurance Corp., Trade and Investment Development Corp. of the Philippines.

Development Bank of the Philippines, Philippine Postal Corp., National Manpower Corp., Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority and the Philippine Economic Zone Authority.

Much ado over tissue

(From page A1)

bathroom tissue ad magnifies a trivial issue and deflects attention from the mounting incidence of rape, growing prostitution and sexual misconceptions that "really hurt Filipino women," according to Lyn Madalang, executive director of the Baguio-based gender rights group Ebgan Inc.

Madalang was referring to a resolution drawn up by councilors in General Santos City condemning the ad as "offensive, insulting and degrading to Filipino women."

The ad of Joy bathroom tissue featured a woman needing to relieve herself and frantically seeking privacy by a roadside.

It was accompanied by a jingle that ran: "*Sa bukid walang papel, ikiskis lang sa pilapil.*" (The line means "There's no paper in the fields, so rub it against the rice paddies," but the flavor is lost in the translation.)

Outraged, the councilors called for a boycott of the paper product in Mindanao.

But Madalang said that the resolution was "ill-advised," and that the councilors might have read too much from the ad.

"The commercial is humor, and you can probably condemn it for bad taste. This is the kind of humor you share with friends during drinking sessions," she said.

"But this is not a moral question," she pointed out. "The council should have attacked commercials that use women to sell a product. Naked or scantily clad women truly harm and injure . . . Filipino women."

Madalang said the "moralistic" officials who found the jingle offensive would probably gag when confronted with the sanitation and health conditions in the countryside.

"Here in the Cordillera, women probably never used the *pilapil*. They used stones: They wade in the river to select the best and smoothest stone. And they use that (in place of toilet paper) when they relieve themselves, before they bring the stones to line the pigpens," Madalang said.

She said that if *pilapil* were replaced with *bato* (stone) in the Joy jingle, "maybe no one will complain anymore."

"I dare anyone who grew up in the rural areas to deny that they relieved themselves in areas where there were no toilets, especially where there were no funds for public toilets and no water sources, and where there were rural health problems," Madalang said.

"Even mayors probably have the same experience," she said.

Jetsports in Subic Saturday

Rider of the Year standings: 1. Carlo Baltao—120 pts 2. John Dee—108 pts. 3. Wacky del Rosario 106 pts., Paul del Rosario—106 points 4. Rene Pamaran—96 pts., BJ Ang—96 pts. 5. Ben Sun Que—87 pts., Mames Baltao 87 pts.

SUBIC—Top riders gear up for tough watersports action in the second leg of the 2001 JSAP Jetsports National Series this Saturday, June 30, at the Subic Waterfront Beach.

First leg winner Carlo Baltao hopes to preserve his lead for the coveted Rider of the Year plum as he guns for his second consecutive win in the Super Stock Expert Run-about 785 class in this event sponsored by Petron.

Baltao, the lone rider who scored a perfect feat of 120 points in the kick-off leg, expects a tough fight from defending champion Paul del Rosario who will try to bounce back after engine problems put his bid for a third straight crown in trouble.

PBA CUP

Pop Cola spanks Mobiline

GAMES TOMORROW *(Philsports)*
5:15 p.m.—Ginebra vs Alaska
7:30 p.m.—Sta. Lucia vs San Miguel

By June Navarro

POP Cola cut loose in the third quarter to upend Mobiline, 82-79, last night in the PBA Commissioner's Cup at the Philsports Arena.

Jason Sasser turned in another prolific performance, pumping in a game-high 32 points and grabbing 16 rebounds that helped the Panthers notch their third victory in six games.

But his deeds could have gone pfft had some of the Panthers' local crew forgotten to perform their respective tasks.

Underrated shooter Ato Morano, Rudy Hatfield and William Antonio pooled their resources together midway in the third to turn the game around.

And while Sasser amazed his opponents at both ends of the floor, Mobiline reinforcement Jerod Ward proved to be a non-factor.

Ward's numbers continued to dip as he only contributed 20 points.

Asi Taulava, on the other hand, rose to occasion with 17 points and 16 rebounds but his efforts were not enough as the Phone Pals dropped to a 2-3 win-loss record.

"I'm glad everything fell into its proper places. That third quarter scoring binge completely spelled the difference," said Pop Cola mentor Chot Reyes.

But that was not the case for the Panthers in the first half of the rollercoaster encounter.

Starting on the right foot, the Phone Pals raced to a 23-11 advantage in the first quarter as they exploited the Panthers' anemic plays.

Ward exploded with three consecutive treys, including a gun-beating triple, to give the Phone Pals enough breathing room.

In the second game, Purefoods routed Shell, 97-79, for its third victory in five games. Shell dropped to 1-5.

POP COLA 82—Sasser 32, Julnio 16, Hatfledi 15, Antonio 8, Morano 7, Abarientos 2, Bolado 2, Asaytono 0, Bellesteros 0, Jarencio 0.

MOBILINE 79—Ward 20, Taulava 17, Pablo 13, Codinera 10, Camaso 7, Ejercito 6, Demape 2, Fran 2, Cui 2, Ravena 0.

Quarters: 11-23; 39-41; 63-56; 82-79

Lakers foil Gems; Knights triumph

GAMES TOMORROW
(San Juan Gym)
3:00 p.m.—Davao vs Negros
5:30 p.m.—Cebu vs San Juan

By Roy Luarca

STA. CRUZ, Laguna—The FedEx Lakers rallied around Jeffrey Flowers and held off the Cebuana Lhuillier Gems, 100-95, last night in the Metropolitan Basketball Association First Phase at the San Luis Sports Complex here.

With Chris Clay ejected, Flowers took charge and coaxed his teammates —Richard Melencio, Biboy Simon and Tek Regidor—to respond to the challenge as the Lakers snapped the Gems' five-game win streak in the elimination round.

Melencio came through with a big defensive rebound off an Al Solis miss from triple territory, got fouled and then hit the two freethrows to ensure the Lakers' second straight victory after dropping their first two games. The Gems slid to 5-2 in a tie with first game victor Andok's San Juan Knights.

Slowly regaining his touch, Simon finished with 15 points, while Regidor canned two crucial charities that helped stave off the Gems' final rally from as many as 21 points down.

Earlier, the Knights extended the Socsargen Marlins' misery with a 114-90 victory.

Led by hotshot Chris Calaguio, scrapper Danny Capobres and slasher Bruce Dacia, the Knights pulled away early in the fourth quarter and coasted to their fifth win in seven starts in the elimination round.

Calaguio pumped in 23 points in the second half to wind up with a game-high 33, Capobres added 21 and Dacia 20 as the Knights handed the Marlins their sixth straight defeat.

SAN JUAN 114—Calagulo 33, Capobres 21, Dacia 20, Alcantara 16, Castillo 10, Rodriguez 4, Victolero 4, Newton 4, Otto 2.

SOCSARGEN 90—Alvarez 24, Echavez 19, Bado 8, De Jesus 8, Natividad 8, Teng 7, Reyes 6, Flores 5, Co 3, Santos 2.

Quarters: 19-29, 45-37, 78-64, 114-90.

Puyat wants PSC out of meeting

By June Navarro

STRICTLY a Philippine Olympic Committee affair only.

Gonzalo "Lito" Puyat, president of the POC-recognized Basketball Association of the Philippines, yesterday voiced out this sentiment after the POC arranged a conciliatory meeting between him and Tiny Literal on Monday.

The meeting, which will have Philippine Sports Commission chair Carlos Tuason as one of the mediators, will be the first since the BAP leadership crisis broke out six months ago.

Fiba, the world governing body in basketball, said that both parties must settle their differences so that the suspension meted against the BAP will be lifted.

But Puyat aired his reservations on the expected presence of Tuason in the supposed meeting, saying the PSC, as a government agency, is in no position to broker the talks.

"*Walang papel ang* PSC *dito* (The PSC has no role here) and no other agency should be involved except the POC," Puyat told the INQUIRER.

He explained that involving the PSC in the meeting is short of allowing the government to intervene in an affair strictly reserved for the Olympic body and its national sports associations.

"I'm still consulting with my group but as far as I'm concerned, I'm willing to sit down and talk with Tiny (Literal) as long as it is strictly a POC affair," said Puyat.

Venus leads march of favorites

WILLIAMS: "I don't feel any pressure to defend my title." AP

WIMBLEDON, England—With a grin, a wave and a merry pirouette, Venus Williams punctuated her triumphant return to Wimbledon.

Centre Court has seen more jubilant displays, most recently when Williams won last year's title. Her 6-2, 6-3 victory over Shinobu Asagoe in the opening round Tuesday inspired only a brief celebration, but it's clear Williams is delighted to be back at the All England Club.

A happy, motivated Williams spells trouble for the rest of the women's draw, and her uneven first-round performance only hinted at the fireworks likely in the second week of the tournament. For Williams, potential showdowns loom against 1999 title holder Lindsay Davenport in the semifinals and - even more tantalizing - against sister Serena Williams or Jennifer Capriati in the final.

"I don't feel any pressure to defend my title," Williams said. "I would just like to win again."

She and the other top players kept their cool on a 90-degree day, and there were no upsets to rival top-seeded Martina Hingis' stunning defeat Monday. The most notable casualty was No. 16-seeded Vladimir Voltchkov, a surprise semifinalist last year.

The sweltering session drew 41,320 fans, the largest turnout in Wimbledon's 115-year history.

All 16 seeded women in action won. Among those joining the No. 2-seeded Williams in the second round were Davenport, French Open runner-up Kim Clijsters and Jelena Dokic, a semifinalist last year.

Winners on the men's side included No. 2-seeded Andre Agassi and two Australians who pose the most formidable threat in his half of the draw, No. 3 Patrick Rafter and No. 5 Lleyton Hewitt.

Agassi, playing in his 200th Grand Slam match, eased past dangerous Dutchman Peter Wessels 7-6 (1), 6-4, 6-4. *AP*

SPORTSWATCH

Davao hosts women's football

DAVAO CITY—Women's football takes the spotlight for the next five days as the Rexona National Women's Football Championships opened Wednesday at the Kapitan Tomas Monteverde Sports Complex pitch here. Defending champion Epson-Davao City, beefed up by three national team standouts led by veteran Shiela Barlovento, looms as the heavy favorite in the tournament organized by the Philippine Football Federation and sponsored by Rexona. The tourney is part of the series of sports under the umbrella of the Rexona Ultimate Challenge Series. PFF president Rene Adad, Davao City Vice Mayor Luis Bonguyan, City Administrator Nestor Ledesma and Davao Football Association president Vic Sai will grace the opening rites at 1 p.m. preceding football hostilities.

Youth triathlon series on tap

THE SECOND leg of the Tri and Fit Youth Triathlon Series will be held this Saturday, June 30, at the Corinthian Gardens in Quezon City with over 100 young triathletes from 7-18 years old expected to participate. Sanctioned by the Triathlon Association of the Philippines (TRAP), the event is sponsored by SMART Money, Vaseline Shampoo, and Lifebuoy, and supported by Penshoppe, Store Shop, Gatorade, MTV-Phils., The Barn, Hard Rock Café, and official radio event stations 92.3 and 93.1. For inquiries, contact 0917-792-8040.

Chiqui humbles male rivals

TELEVISION host Chiqui Roa outshone her male rivals in the recently concluded FWD (forward) Domination at the Outback Restaurant in Libis, Quezon City. FWD Domination is the counterpart of the TV hit, Survivor 2: The Australian outback where participants are ranged against physical challenges and mental skills. Asserting her might in the opening leg Taebo marathon, Roa, alongside Michelle Felipe, outkicked and outpunched her male foes in a non-stop fashion. Roa spiced up her winning run when she answered most of the questions in the Trivia segment to end up winner in the event. FWD Domination was sponsored by FWD magazine, Outback Restaurant and co-presented by 360 shoes in cooperation with 93.9 KCFM, 89.9 Magic, 99.5RT, NU 107, Gatorade Thirst Quencher, and Sunto Outdoor Adventure Watches.

Practical shooting tourney set

THE Philippine Practical Shooting Association (PSA) will conduct its National Capital Region Area Championships on June 29 to July 1 at the Armscor Shooting Range in Parang, Marikina, PPSA president, Rep. Jack Enrile (1st D. Cagayan) announced yesterday. Known as the Demetrio "Bolo" Tuason Cup, the NCR Area Championship is the first level III competition to be held after the enforced hiatus in the practical sport shooting community brought about by the recent elections. "The PPSA Board has decided that in order to level the playing field in the practical shooting sport, it will not be seeding its shooters. Instead, selection of the Philippine Team to the World Shoot XIII in South Africa will be based on the individual shooter's performance in a series of qualifying matches," said Enrile.

UST lady jins dominate field

UNIVERSITY of Santo Tomas jins, led by the younger sister of Olympian Jasmin Strachan, dominated the 2001 Milo all-women's taekwondo championships last Sunday at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium. Josephine, the Olympian's sister, beat teammate Bernadette Rozon to bag the gold medal in the light/welter and middle/heavy category of the senior division. The other UST gold medalists were finweight Nancy Remollena, who toppled teammate Mary Joanne Catalan; flyweight Mary Diorlyn Papelara, who whipped Powerflex's Ivy Alindogan, and bantamweight Grace Brioso, who outfought Strikezone's Merlita Tasic. Featherweight Mary Antoinette Rivero of St. Paul (Pasig) was the only non-UST bet to win a gold. She beat Ilocos Norte's Ernalin Bumaglag in the finals.

Jordan to start draft

NEW YORK—As 14 of the players expected to be among the first taken in Wednesday night's NBA draft gathered in a hotel ballroom, one name dominated the conversations.

Whether it was the high school stars who would soon be millionaires or the few upperclassmen set to round out the lottery, Michael Jordan was talked about for a lot of reasons.

As the man who runs the Washington Wizards, the team with the overall No. 1 pick, Jordan will get the draft started at Madison Square Garden with either a selection or a trade. *AP*

RACING TIPS

AT SANTA ANA
By Mr. 999

Race 1—1. Strong Alphonse 2. Friendly Lover 3. Fire Mouth 4. Ikaw

Race 2—1. Justsaywhenjen 2. Make Your Mark 3. Bold Freddy 4. Tower of Power

Race 3—1. Down for Double 2. Ariana's Pride 3. Steel Wheel 4. Rock's Dragon

Race 4—1. Rivine Master 2. Sunrise 3. Boomerang 4. Lovely Luigi

Race 5—1. Pep Up 2. Grand Dragon 3. Red Hahn 4. Gambatte

Race 6—1. Strawberry Joy 2. Cue Artist 3. Money In Motion/Glory Allelujia 4. Achilles Heels

Race 7—1. Dona Evelyn 2. Southern Gent 3. Poblacion 4. Kamahalan

Race 8—1. Gold Honors 2. Rose In Bloom 3. Gracious Heart 4. Morning Glory 5. Denon 6. Ceasar's Inn

Dance sport tilt at Ninoy July 14

WITH international coach and adjudicator Wolfgang Opitz heading the panel of foreign judges, the Dance Sport Council of the Philippines will stage the 5th Mid-year Ranking and Competition for the Alaxan Cup at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium on July 14.

According to DSCP founding president Becky Garcia, Opitz will also conduct a two-day workshop on July 12 for Standard competitors and on July 13 for Latin-American dance athletes, also at the NAS, where the DSCP general assembly and dance athletes election will be held on July 12 and 13, respectively. Two more adjudicators from Hong Kong and Singapore will be arriving to judge the year's biggest dance competition sponsored by Doctor Trusted Alaxan, Philippine Sports Commission, Philippine Olympic Committee, Rainforest, Dance Exchange, Savannah Moon, ABC 5 Eazy Dancing, NBC Radio 1026 AM and Century Park Hotel.

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Martelino, Domingo at SCOOP

FORMER ABC secretary general Moying Martelino, Immigrations Chief Andrea Domingo and top Filipino triathlete Vicky Amara are tomorrow's guests in the SCOOP forum at the Kamayan West Avenue. Martelino will explain the consequences of the withdrawal of the Fiba sanction on the Basketball Association of the Philippines' and the probable solution to the association's leadership crisis.

SPORTS
AL S. MENDOZA, Editor **EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA**, Assistant Editor

SPORTS ON TV

COMPILED BY LORENZO MANGUIAT

TENNIS: Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Championships, Day #3 Highlights at 8 a.m. (r – 7 p.m.), Day 3, Second Round at 12 noon (r), Day 4, 2nd/3rd Round at 8 p.m. on Star Sports

GOLF: PGA Buick Classic, Final Round at 9 a.m. (r), Tour Highlights at 6 p.m. on Star Sports

BASEBALL: Wednesday Night Baseball at 7 a.m. and 1 p.m. on ESPN

161 tee off for 86th RP Open today

By Al S. Mendoza

THERE is no clear favorite in the chase for the P1.5-million top prize as a huge field of 161 tees off for the 86th Philippine Open Golf championship today at Wack Wack.

Despite heavy rains yesterday, Wack Wack held its fort and is battle-ready for the next four days of the fabled Open.

Rodrigo Cuello, the best credentialled among the locals with his two victories overseas during the last four years, loomed as the spearhead of the local contingent in trying to deflect a foreign invasion led by former Philippine Masters champion Ollie Nordberg.

Among those in the final list of 79 foreigners coming from 17 countries are Canadian Rick Gibson, American Chris Walky of the famous David Leadbetter Academy and Asian Tour veteran Aaron Meeks of the United States.

Cuello will get the usual support from local standouts Tony Lascuña, Richard Sinfuego, Rey Pagunsan, 1997 RP Open runner-up Mars Pucay, the ageless Mario Siodina and 1990 Open champion Robert Pactolerin.

Gerard Cantada is listed a darkhorse as the debuting pro knows Wack Wack like the palm of his hand.

"With some luck, I might yet score some breakthroughs," said the 24-year-old Cantada, who learned the game at Wack Wack.

Casino Filipino and San Miguel Beer are the chief backers of the P9.5-million event that is also supported by Mitsubishi, Herma Group of Companies, Hope Luxury Cigarettes, Hanjin Shipping, Prudentialife, General Milling, Metrobank, Bingo Bonanza, Citra Tollways, Rudy Project, Unilever, Marsman Drysdale, Pyramid Construction, Mizuno, Wallem Shipping, Executive Golfers, Riviera GCC, Philippine Navy, GG&A Club Shares, Electrobus, Solahart, Philtec Label, U-Bix, PLDT, Aristocrat Lamps, Caffe Appassionato, Villamor Golf Club, G.E. Management, Marriott Vacation Club, Greens Management, First Georgetown Ventures, Nextel, Marriott, Shoemart, Citgo and Cinnabon.

A Mitsubishi Lancer is being staked as a hole-in-one prize.

CUELLO

CANTADA

PACTOLERIN

US remains Rosales dream

By Jong Arcano

EVEN before he could tee-off for the 86th Philippine Open today, Gerald Rosales had his sights already on making it to the United States Tour next year.

The lack of better opportunities here and in the Asian circuit has emboldened Rosales to fast-forward his plans.

"There's really nowhere to go. I've prepared myself by competing in the Asian Tour and I think I need to keep on taking all the chances while they're there," said Rosales, the best-placed Filipino in the Order of Merit of the Asian Tour at 23rd.

Rosales recently joined the US Open sectional qualifying in California but missed the cut by a mere stroke after collapsing with a 77 in the second round.

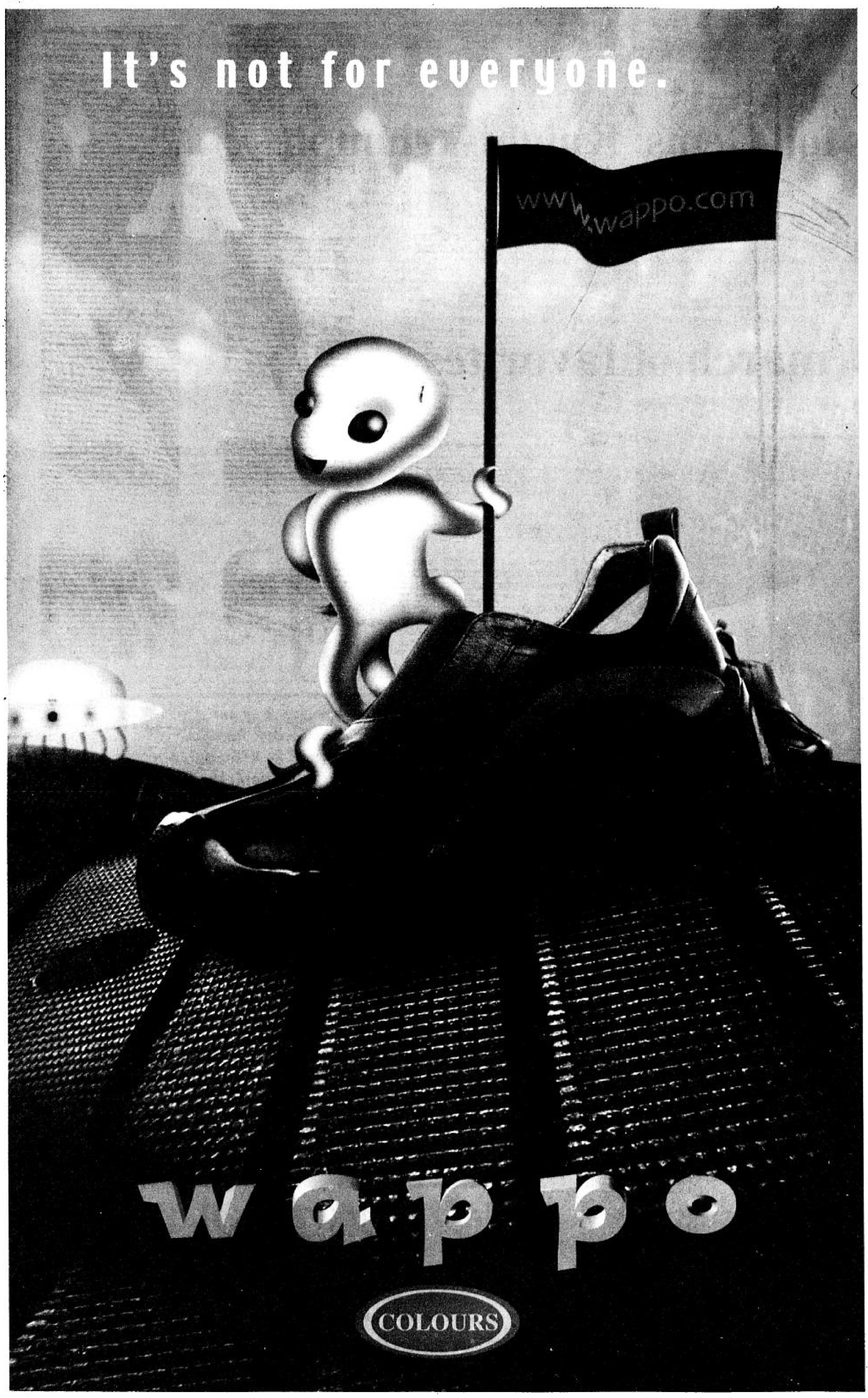
"It was a sorry miss but it's part of the learning process. I'll definitely try again next year. Who knows? I won't even have to go through the same process again if I get lucky on the qualifying school," he said.

No Filipino has ever made it as a regular of the US PGA Tour.

Frankie Miñoza, according to his close associates, seems not interested in pursuing the US angle despite getting a two-year exemption from the Japanese Tour by virtue of his winning the Fujisankei Classic.

The Maxfli-sponsored Rosales, whose sister, Jenny, is now a regular on the US LPGA Tour, also wants to gain enough points to assure him of his Asian Tour card for next season.

ROSALES



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Abu terror plan in Metro confirmed A20

METRO

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Honesty reaps big rewards

MONDOYO

By TJ Burgonio

AFTER she returned an envelope containing $10,000, Florita Mondoyo, a contractual janitress at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, got a P300 reward from the Indian owners of misplaced dollars.

Mondoyo, who earns only P180 a day, however readily gave away the reward money to her colleagues.

She obviously felt she did not deserve the money because, as she would maintain, she was only doing her job.

Asked why she returned the misplaced dollars, a fortune in most people's standard, the soft-spoken Mondoyo simply said: "It wasn't mine."

But for her act of honesty, Mondoyo, the eldest of six children and the family's breadwinner, is reaping her well-deserved rewards.

Yesterday morning, airport general manager Edgardo Manda awarded Mondoyo P5,000 cash and P2,000 in gift certificates.

Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon also gave Mondoyo P5,000 cash.

The shy janitress received the reward and praise from her superiors and colleagues clad in her yellow uniform.

Pleased with Mondoyo's honesty, Manda also offered the janitress a two-year scholarship grant and a permanent job at the airport.

Dr. James Dy, president of Filipino-Chinese Charitable Association, also offered Mondoyo full-time employment at the Chinese General Hospital and Medical Center.

HONESTY/A20

But returning trader is left crying at Naia

A PLEASANT tour in the United States turned into a nightmare for a businesswoman after she found her jewelry worth P.5 million missing from her luggage upon arrival at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport on Tuesday.

Marivic Gabat, 44, of Valenzuela City, said her luggage was slashed on its side and its lock was missing when she picked it up from the baggage conveyor at the arrival area of Naia Terminal 1.

As she sifted through her baggage, Gabat said she was shocked to find that her jewelry box containing assorted pieces of personal jewelry, worth about P500,000, and six make-up kits were missing.

Gabat, who flew in aboard a Japan Airlines flight from Los Angeles via Tokyo about 9 p.m. Tuesday after a month-long

BUT/A20

Wazzzzup?

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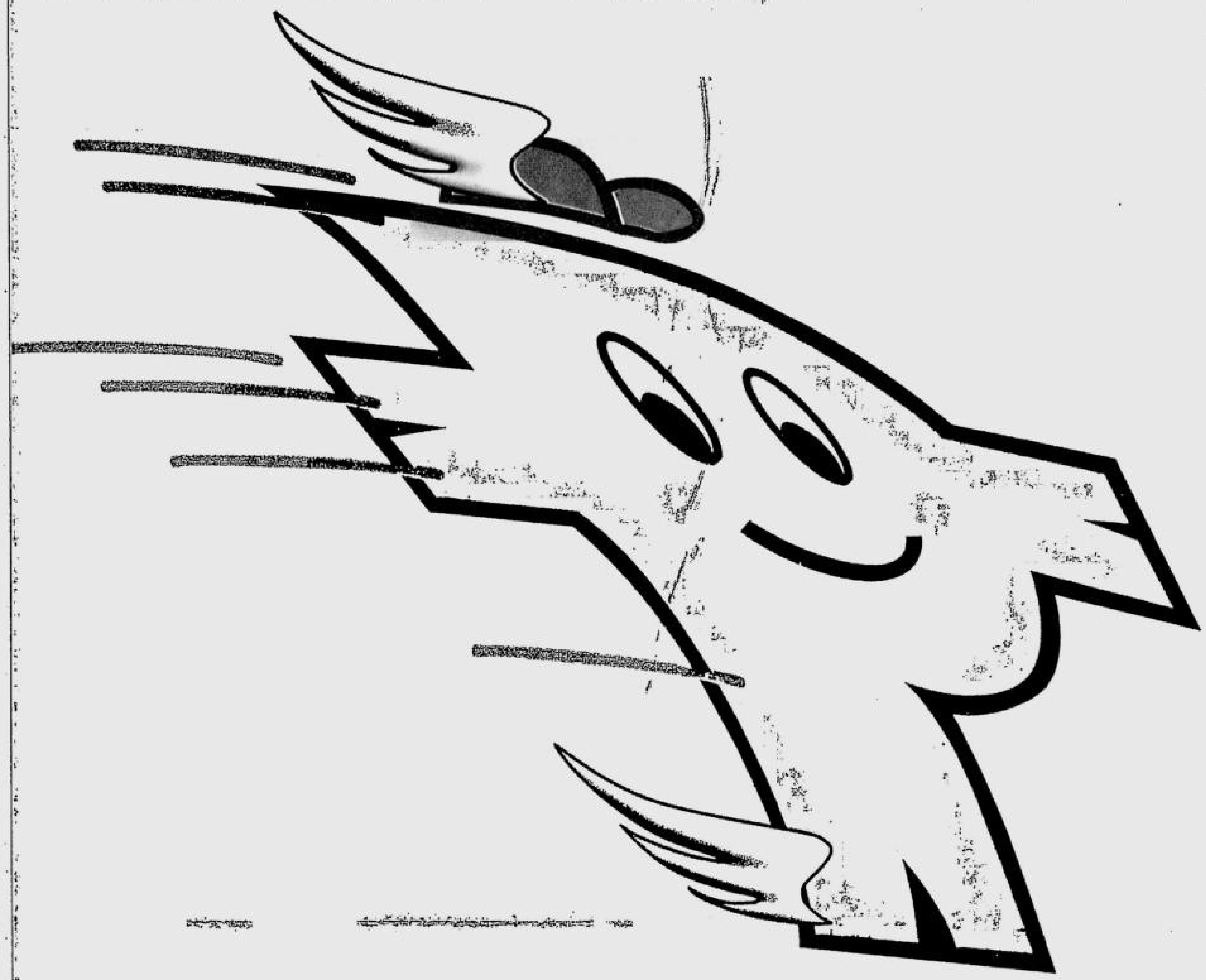

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Robbers kill 3 in Pasay break-in

By Nelson F. Flores

THREE MEN, including a security guard, were killed yesterday morning when unidentified robbers hit a shopping center in Pasay City, stealing jewelry of still undetermined worth.

Police said security guard Gilbert Ismakilan, Felix Aranez and Delfin Binahan were found dead inside the Jeepney Shopping Center on Taft Avenue, just a few meters away from the Vito Cruz station of the Light Rail Transit in Pasay City.

Guard Ismakilan, of the Energetic Security Agency detailed at the JSC, was stabbed dead at his post on the ground floor of the three-story building, police said.

The hogtied bodies of Aranez and Binahan, both stay-in employees of the JSC, were found on the second and third floors. The robbers apparently used blunt objects to bash in their heads, police said.

The manner by which the three men were slain suggested that the robbers were either extremely angry with the victims or they were drug dependents on a bloody trip, investigators said.

One investigator who asked not to be identified believed the victims knew the robbers hence they were killed. He noted how other stay-in employees at the JSC were spared even if they were vulnerable to attack.

"In my experience, if it were a simple robbery, the victims would not have been killed," the investigator said in Filipino.

JSC owner Jerry Lim told investigators that the victims were found dead about 5:30 a.m., when other stay-in employees woke up.

PO3 Fernando Escol, Pasay City police homicide investigator, said the robbers apparently entered the shopping complex by breaking into the toilet window on the ground floor. Escol said the locks of the display room on the third floor were also destroyed.

Escol said that after the robbers killed the three men, they ransacked the third floor and took all the jewelry on display before escaping quietly.

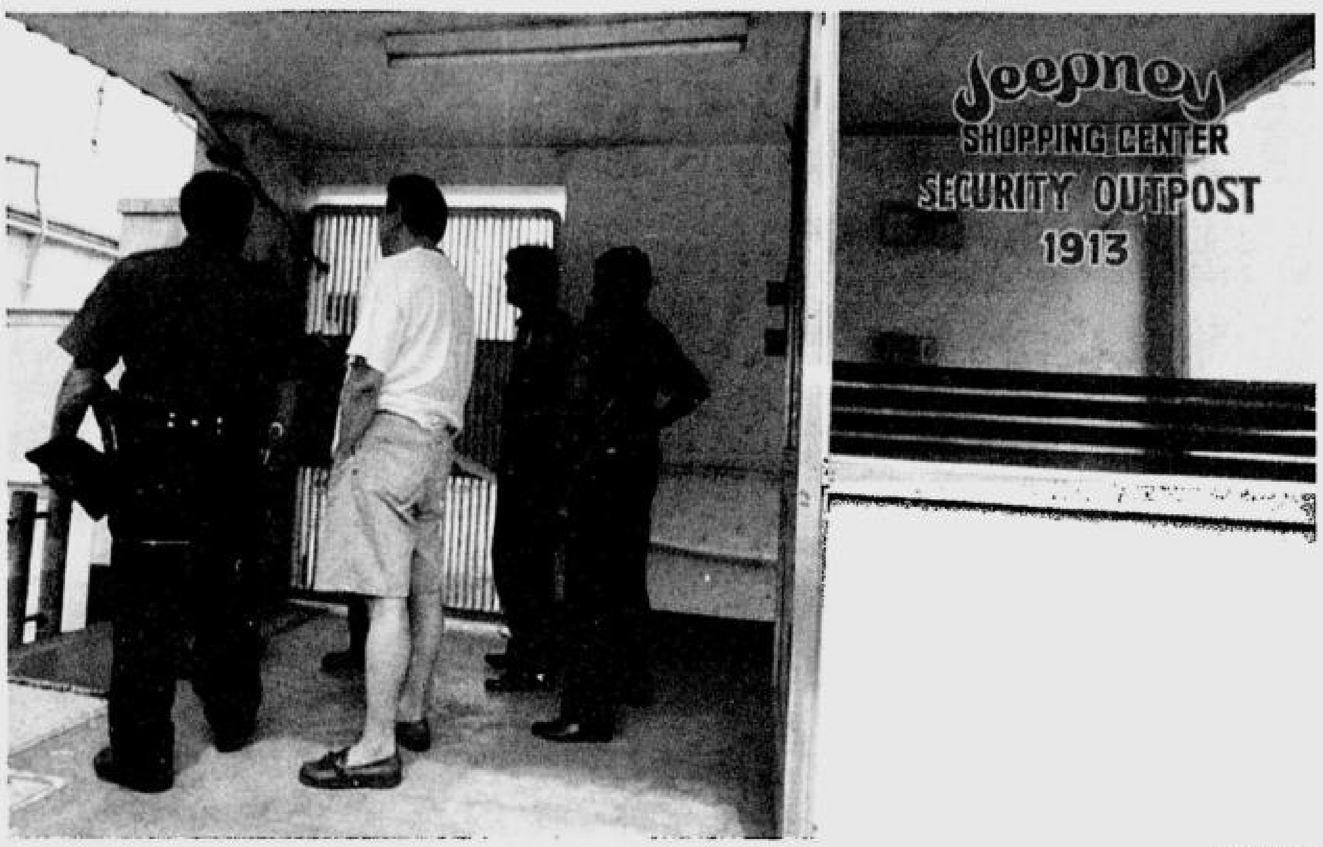
Police have already lifted a number of fingerprints from the crime scene, some of which may belong to the robbers, Escol said.

Police are not discounting the possibility that JSC insiders might be involved in the murderous heist.

But Lim, JSC owner, believed the robbers were from a slum on nearby San Juan Street. He said that prior to the robbery, there were several break-in attempts at the JSC, but all were foiled by alert security guards.

The densely populated slum on San Juan Street has been the subject of a number of complaints from concerned citizens, including outgoing city Councilor Justo Justo.

Senior Supt. Jose Gutierrez, Southern Police District Office director, has ordered his men to conduct a sweep of San Juan Street and arrest every known criminal with pending warrants.



JESS YUSON

COPS sort out possible clues at the Jeepney Shopping Center where bodies of three victims were found yesterday.

METROBRIEFS

Death for killer who cut boss into 8

A MAN who clubbed his employer to death before cutting him up into eight pieces three years ago has been sentenced to death by the Antipolo court. Judge Mauricio Rivera of the Antipolo City Regional Trial Court Branch 73 found Eric Guillermo guilty of murdering Victor Keyser, owner of RF Keyser Corporation. He also ordered the convict to pay Keyser's mother P1.5 million for indemnity, funeral expenses, compensatory and exemplary damages, as well as attorney's fees. Court records showed Guillermo had complained of being maltreated by his employer before the killing on March 22, 1998 at the compound of the RF Keyser factory located at Sitio Halang, Barangay San Roque, Antipolo. SPO1 Carlito Reyes said the convict admitted to hitting Keyser with a piece of wood on the head and later cutting his body with a carpenter's saw. In court, however, Guillermo denied having had any ill feelings against the victim and claimed he had been forced to admit the crime. Judge Rivera said he could have given Guillermo a lighter sentence had he not withdrawn the guilty plea he had earlier made.

Agnes Donato

Man killed in Muslim area

A 24-YEAR-OLD man was shot and killed after single-handedly fighting three unidentified armed men in front of the Muslim mosque in Quiapo Tuesday night. Victim Daud Kadtugan Ankan, married, a native of Cotabato City and resident of 842 Globo de Oro St., Quiapo suffered four gunshot wounds in the chest and back. Ankan was walking along Gunao Street a few steps away from his residence when he was confronted by the suspects around 7:35 p.m.SPO1 Diomedes Labarda of the city police's homicide section, said the four chatted for a minute and next argued noisily. One of the suspects drew out a gun and shot Ankan several times. Wounded, Ankan managed to pull out his gun and shot the suspects, hitting one of them. The suspects however escaped by taking one of the dimly lit alleys in the area.

Jerome Aning

Lightning kills boy

A 15-YEAR-OLD boy was struck and killed by lightning as he was playing in the rain the other day in Valenzuela City. Authorities said Lou Salvador, a student of Polo High School and resident of ACA Compound, Barangay Malanday, Valenzuela, died of third-degree burns as he was playing with two other boys at a vacant lot on ACA Compound during a heavy downpour Thursday afternoon. The boys were about to go home when a lightning bolt flashed and hit Salvador, investigation showed. Salvador was charred but his two companions were unhurt.

Christian Esguerra

Cell phone thief slips

A ROAD made slippery by the rains Tuesday afternoon caused the capture of a notorious cell phone snatcher in Tondo, Manila. Suspect Ronald Bautista alias Nana, 28, an alleged member of the Sigue-Sigue Sputnik Gang and a resident of 243 Maria Payo St., Tondo, was about to elude four policemen pursuing him on Radial Road 10 when he slipped. Rice dealer Landrita Jebone, of Tunasan, Muntinlupa City, said she was inside a jeepney on R-10 around when the suspect poked a knife at her and snatched her Panasonic cell phone unit worth P6,000. Jebone sought assistance from Gloria Agacer, a barangay chair in the area, who recognized Bautista from the description given by the victim. The two women went to Station 2 and cops were sent out to find the suspect and give chase. Bautista was charged with robbery. The cell phone was not recovered.

Jerome Aning

Illegal recruiter nabbed

A RECRUITER who allegedly duped several Malabon residents of over P50,000 in supposed placement fees was arrested on Tuesday. Angry complainants stormed the Malabon Police Station to press charges against Wilfredo Japson, 41, of Sanciangco Street, Barangay Catmon, Malabon. Japson, who introduced himself as an "executive processor," is facing charges of large-scale illegal recruitment before the city prosecutor's office. Japson claimed he was running Helpline Documentation Assistance, said to be a recruitment agency. But a check with the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency showed there was no such recruitment agency, police said.

Christian Esguerra

Abu terror plans in Metro confirmed

By Carlito Pablo

THE INTELLIGENCE community has unearthed a plot by the Abu Sayyaf to stage terror bomb attacks on specific targets in Metro Manila.

The plot was revealed by an alleged Abu Sayyaf intelligence officer who was tasked to lay the groundwork for the terror offensive in the metropolis.

Intelligence officials identified the alleged Abu Sayyaf member as Harsim Abdulajid, alias Harsim and Sim.

Details of Abdulajid's arrest were revealed in an intelligence report issued only yesterday.

According to the report, Abdulajid was arrested at the Food Terminal Inc. Complex in Taguig about 7:30 p.m. on June 17 by combined elements of the Army's Intelligence and Security Group, the Counter-Intelligence Office of the Philippine National Police and the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency.

Judge Danilo Bucoy of the Basilan Regional Trial Court issued an arrest warrant for Abdulajid, the report said.

Abdulajid is now detained at the headquarters of the PNP's Intelligence Group in Camp Crame.

Abdulajid's disclosure confirmed earlier reports that the terrorist group is poised to bring the conflict to the metropolis.

A memo reportedly issued last week to station commanders of the Central Police District, warned that an Abu Sayyaf unit has already left for Metro Manila allegedly to carry out its terror agenda in the metropolis.

The bombings were supposed to be directed by Hair Moktar alias Abu Moktar, an explosive expert trained in Peshawar, Pakistan, near the border with Afghanistan.

Abdulajid identified Moktar through a file photo of police intelligence.

"Abdulajid admitted he is an intelligence operative of the urban intelligence unit of the Abu Sayyaf group, under ASG leader Isnilon Hapilon, and tasked to monitor military and police movements in Basilan," the report said.

Hapilon is one of the Sulu-based leaders of the Abu Sayyaf. He was said to have led the attack on a coconut plantation in Lantawan, Basilan, reportedly to divert increasing military pressure on the main Abu Sayyaf force under Khadafy Janjalani and spokesperson Abu Sabaya.

"Upon instruction of Jairon Munib, (Abdulajid) proceeded to Metro Manila to locate Abubakar Janjalani and to establish safehouses for ASG members who will stage bombings and other terroristic activities in the metropolis," the report said.

The military did not furnish any background for both Janjalani and Munib.

It was not known whether the Janjalani mentioned in the report is related to Janjalani brothers Khadafy and the late Abdurajak, the foreign-trained preacher who founded the Abu Sayyaf.

JV sure Jinggoy will be there

SAN Juan Mayor Joseph Victor Ejercito was apparently confident that his predecessor, jailed Mayor Jinggoy Estrada, would be able to attend his oath-taking rites.

According to San Juan Councilor Vincent Pacheco, the acting San Juan vice mayor, Ejercito has already included his half-brother in the program for the turnover ceremonies on Monday.

Estrada has asked the Sandiganbayan for another day of temporary freedom to be able to witness Ejercito's oath taking and bid his farewell to the people of San Juan. Prior to this, he has already been granted a five-day temporary liberty to "clear his desk" at the municipal hall.

Pacheco said Estrada would supposedly play a vital part during the ceremonies that would start with a Mass in front of the San Juan municipal Hall at around 7 a.m. of July 2.

But in the event that Estrada is not allowed to join the turnover rites in San Juan, Estrada's wife Precy, would be standing in his place.

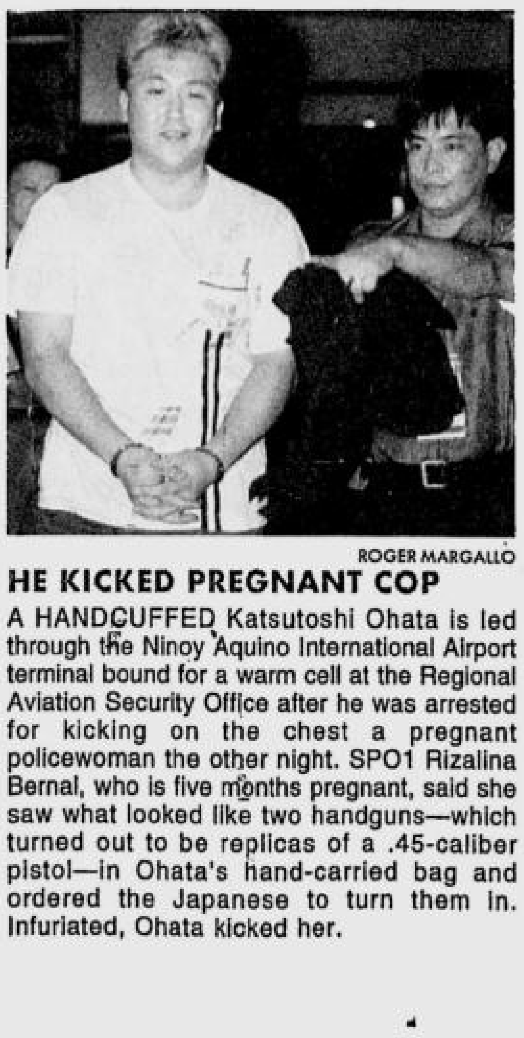
Agnes Donato

Fil-Am educators due

THE FILIPINO-AMERICAN educators of Seattle, Washington, now known as Filipino and American Educators Foundation (FAME), International will be arriving at 11:25 a.m. on Friday via EVA Airline at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport

To welcome the Seattle Educators are the National Capital Region's Association of Secondary School Administrators (NCR-ASSA) officers headed by Gloria Y. Adams.

Dr. Corazon D. Santiago, Director IV, DECS-NCR, will spearhead the day-to-day activities of the Seattle Educators during the Educational Exchange Program through the NCR-ASSA from June 29 to July 4.



ROGER MARGALLO

HE KICKED PREGNANT COP

A HANDCUFFED Katsutoshi Ohata is led through the Ninoy Aquino International Airport terminal bound for a warm cell at the Regional Aviation Security Office after he was arrested for kicking on the chest a pregnant policewoman the other night. SPO1 Rizalina Bernal, who is five months pregnant, said she saw what looked like two handguns—which turned out to be replicas of a .45-caliber pistol—in Ohata's hand-carried bag and ordered the Japanese to turn them in. Infuriated, Ohata kicked her.

Honesty . . .

(From page A19)

Not only that. Dy also said Mondoyo could ride a Super Ferry ship free of charge for life to go to her village in Palawan and return to Manila.

Manda said that Mondoyo's "act of honesty is a big boost to the tourism industry."

"At least, tourists know that something good is happening at the airports. Honesty is the one that we value. Honesty pays," Manda told reporters.

Indian Nedhal Alohalain and Abdul Hakeem Aman left the envelope containing the dollars on one of the seats at the pre-departure area of the old Manila Domestic Airport last Monday. The two were in a hurry to board a flight for Baguio City.

Mondoyo, 31, who found the envelope, wasted no time and turned it over to terminal operations officer Dina de Leon, who promptly paged its owner.

The Indians claimed the envelope with the money. But in their haste to return to their airplane, they reportedly failed to thank Mondoyo.

The P300 reward came much later.

Mondoyo, who rents an apartment inside the Villamor Air Base, only wants one thing for now. She hopes to see her parents and siblings in Palawan.

She wants to tell them of her newfound fortune in the city.

PNP does a splendid job

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

THE PHILIPPINE National Police did a splendid job in keeping the peace yesterday, the arraignment of deposed President Estrada at the Sandiganbayan in Quezon City.

There were intelligence reports that some quarters would make destabilization moves during the arraignment.

But no such thing happened probably because the PNP studied all possible worst-case scenarios and prepared solutions.

Congratulations!

***

But we hope the splendid performance of the PNP yesterday would spill over to its campaign against kidnappers and bank robbers.

The PNP is doing its best in eliminating or at least minimizing these index crimes. But apparently its best is not good enough.

The citizenry expects more from the police in going after kidnappers and bank robbers.

***

If I were Deputy Director General Romeo Peña, director of the National Capital Region Police Office, I would resign from the position to give way to a more efficient general.

Peña continues to hold on to the position when he's very ill. He stays more in the hospital than in his office. The result is that the Metro Manila police command is practically without a leader. And so, the crime rate in the metropolis goes up every day.

Replacing Peña with a healthy officer would probably bring down the crime rate in Metro Manila.

***

Peña, a three-star general, was placed in the position that's only for a one or two-star general, to please the powerful Iglesia ni Cristo (INC). Nobody in government displeased the INC and got away with it.

So, the square- peg- in-a – round-hole Peña, who was not efficient as director of the Southern Police District, was installed as the Metro Manila's overall police chief to please a religious group.

When the May Day mob attacked Malacañang, Peña could not order his men to control it because most of its members were his *kapatid* at the INC.

***

Now that the military has captured the intelligence officer of the Abu Sayyaf, Abdullah Yusop, it should extract information from him about the relatives of its officers.

If the military knew the close relatives—wives, children, parents, brothers, sisters—it would be easy to negotiate with them.

How? Gather all their relatives and make bargaining chips out of them.

If the Abu Sayyafs killed the hostages, then some of their relatives would have to suffer the same fate.

That's the language Moros understand.

***

During the time of President Marcos, Moro rebels kidnapped an American in Zamboanga.

The military pleaded for the release of the hostage but their plea fell on deaf ears.

Somebody brought up the idea of the military also holding some relatives of the hostage-takers as bargaining chips.

The American hostage was released in no time at all.

The only way to deal with those Moros is to play their own kind of game. But this game is not for the squeamish and human rights advocates.

***

Two cops from the Central Police District (CPD) warrant section arrested comedian Gary Lising Tuesday night within the premises of ABS-CBN even as he pleaded with them to let him finish taping of a show.

Lising said the cops were hinting to be paid off in exchange for letting him go.

The criminal case filed against the comedian was in connection the non-remittance of Social Security System (SSS) contributions by his business firm. Gary said he left the job of remitting the SSS contributions to his accountant who evidently was remiss.

When Gary Lising was arrested, the joke was on him.

***

An appeal to Mandaluyong Mayor Benhur Abalos: Please don't allow the construction of a drive-in motel in Barangay Pagasa.

The appeal comes from officials and residents of the barangay.

The proposed motel would practically be within spitting distance from two schools and a chapel, barangay residents say.

But returning . . .

(From page A19)

pleasure tour, said she suspected that her luggage had been pilfered at the Naia.

"It was one of the pieces of baggage that came out last in the conveyor. Someone could have pilfered it down there. This kind of thing often happens at the airport. It should be stopped," Gabat said.

She has filed a complaint with the airline and airport security office.

Cargoes unloaded from airplane go through an X-ray examination before they are transferred to the conveyor. There had been complaints about baggage not coming out from the conveyor.

But a police official who asked not to be named said that complaints of baggage pilferage at the Naia have sharply gone down in the past couple of months.

"What's in vogue now is that baggage pilferage happens at the point of origin. That's where the contents of the baggage are first known via X-ray," he said.

TJ Burgonio

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3	HEAD OVER HEELS
4	KASIBULAN
5	PEARL HARBOR
6	MILA

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5	PEARL HARBOR	In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
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7	ACCIDENTAL SPY	In DTS DIGITAL SOUND

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3	MILA
4	LUV TEXT
5	KASIBULAN
6	TOMB RAIDER
7	ACCIDENTAL SPY
8	APOY SA KARAGATAN

LOUIE'S CINEMA THX
(Makati City) tel 751.2010/892.3349

1	TOMB RAIDER

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	BUHAY KAMAO
2	PEARL HARBOR

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC
tel 930.9515

1	
2	MILA
3	KASIBULAN

Spring
(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864

1	MILA
A	

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	TOMB RAIDER
2	MILA
3	ACCIDENTAL SPY
4	

GOTESCO CINEMA

City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

1 (DOLBY)	TOMB RAIDER
2	RESERVE
3	RESERVE
4	APOY SA KARAGATAN
5	EVOLUTION
6	MILA
7 (DTS)	TOMB RAIDER
8 (SDDS)	ACCIDENTAL SPY
9 (DOLBY)	PEARL HARBOR

Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	TOMB RAIDER

Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1	MILA
2	LUV TEXT
3	APOY SA KARAGATAN
4 (SDDS)	EVOLUTION
5	ACCIDENTAL SPY
6 (DOLBY)	TOMB RAIDER
7 (DTS)	TOMB RAIDER
8	KASIBULAN
9	BUHAY KAMAO

Commonwealth
tel 951.0083

1 (DTS)	TOMB RAIDER
2	MILA
3	APOY SA KARAGATAN
4	ACCIDENTAL SPY
5 (SDDS)	EVOLUTION
6	LUV TEXT
7 (DOLBY)	TOMB RAIDER
8	KASIBULAN

Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	TOMB RAIDER
2	APOY SA KARAGATAN
3 (DTS)	ACCIDENTAL SPY
4	MILA
5 (SDDS)	TOMB RAIDER

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	TOMB RAIDER

Sampaquita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	MILA

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson	AN DECENT BEHAVIOR
Lords	APOY SA KARAGATN
Jennet	MILA

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

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2	MILA
3	APOY SA KARAGATAN
4	ACCIDENTAL SPY

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215

1	
2	MILA

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	TOMB RAIDER
2	ACCIDENTAL SPY
3	APOY SA KARAGATAN
4	MILA
5	LUV TEXT

New Divisoria Mall
CINEMA tel 244.4619

1	MILA
2	APOY SA KARAGATAN
3	KASIBULAN
4	LUV TEXT
5	ACCIDENTAL SPY
6	TOMB RAIDER

Baclaran LRT
CINEMA tel 512.0115

1 (DOLBY)	MILA
2	TOMB RAIDER
3	APOY SA KARAGATAN
4	
5	

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna) tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1	MILA
2	KASIBULAN
3 (DTS)	TOMB RAIDER

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	MILA
2 (DTS)	THE REPLICANT
3 (DOLBY)	TOMB RAIDER
4	EVOLUTION

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	ACCIDENTAL SPY
2	KASIBULAN
3	MILA
4 (DTS)	TOMB RAIDER

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545 7202

1 (DOLBY)	TOMB RAIDER
2	MILA
3 (DTS)	LUVTEXT
4	KASIBULAN
5	THE REPLICANT

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	MILA
2	TOMB RAIDER
3	THE REPLICANT

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 536.5101

1	MILA
2	TOMB RAIDER
3	THE REPLICANT

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311

1	PEARL HARBOR
2	MILA
3	BUHAY KAMAO

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511 9736

1	MILA
2	TOMB RAIDER
3	THE REPLICANT

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	MILA
2 (DTS)	TOMB RAIDER

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1	MILA

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	KASIBULAN
2	TOMB RAIDER
3	MILA

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	LUV TEXT
2	KASIBULAN
3	MILA
4	THE REPLICANT

Berma
tel 879.2168

1	MILA
2	TOMB RAIDER

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

1	KASIBULAN
2	ACCIDENTAL SPY
3	MILA
4	TOMB RAIDER

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	TOMB RAIDER
2	MILA
3	HEAD OVER HEELS
4 (DTS ES)	EVOLUTION

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- EVOLUTION

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- TOMB RAIDER
- ACCIDENTAL SPY
- HEAD OVER HEELS
- EVOLUTION
- PEARL HARBOR
- THE MUMMY RETURNS
- MILA
- GET OVER IT
- TOMB RAIDER

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- TOMB RAIDER
- MILA
- EVOLUTION
- PEARL HARBOR
- ACCIDENTAL SPY

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- HEAD OVER HEELS
- BUHAY KAMAO
- PEARL HARBOR
- POSSESSED
- KAMASUTRA

DOLBY dts SDDS

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101

ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	LUV TEXT
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	MILA
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	TOMB RAIDER
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	EVOLUTION
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	ACCIDENTAL SPY
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	PEARL HARBOR
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	TOMB RAIDER
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	TOMB RAIDER
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	ACCIDENTAL SPY
FIESTA CARNIVAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
NEW FRONTIER	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

MANILA

EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	DI MAPIGIL ANG INIT / SPLENDOR
ODEON	TOMB RAIDER
ODEON-2	ACCIDENTAL SPY
ROBEN	MILA
TANDEM-1	KUNG LILIGAYA KA
TANDEM-2	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
TIMES	3.000 MILES / WHAT WOMEN WANTS

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	APOY SA KARAGATAN
QUEZON-1	TOMB RAIDER
REMAR	MILA
REMAR-2	ACCIDENTAL SPY

CUBAO

OCEAN SUPERAMA	BABAENG PUTIK
OCEAN CINEMA-A	PANABLA
OCEAN CINEMA-B	CRISELDA

MANDALUYONG CITY

SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	DR. T AND A WOMEN
CINEMA-2	TOMB RAIDER

CINEMA-1	BUHAY KAMAO
CINEMA-2	KASIBULAN
CINEMA-3	APOY SA KARAGATAN
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	HEAD OVER HEELS
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	TOMB RAIDER
CINEMA-6	THE MUMMY RETURNS
CINEMA-7	LUV TEXT
CINEMA-8	MILA
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	TOMB RAIDER
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	TOMB RAIDER
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	EVOLUTION
CINEMA-12	ACCIDENTAL SPY
CINEMA-14	PEARL HARBOR
CINEMA-15	MILA

CINEMA-3	CLOSED

CINEMA-2	EVOLUTION
CINEMA-3	TOMB RAIDER
CINEMA-4	TOMB RAIDER
CINEMA-5	PEARL HARBOR
CINEMA-6	TOMB RAIDER

CINEMA-1	EXIT WOUNDS
CINEMA-2	KAMANDAG NG ROSAS
CINEMA-4	BLONDIE - 2

CINEMA-1	EXIT WOUNDS
CINEMA-2	DI MAPIGIL ANG INIT
CINEMA-4	HIYAS

Int'l bar chain opens tonight

MANILA partygoers will get a taste of something new with the grand opening of the Baja Beach Club tonight on Pasay Road, Makati City (above Cable Car).

Why Baja?

"Baja is one my favorite places in the world," owner Jean Percy states. "Baja is renowned for its year-round good weather, surfing and party atmosphere, so I thought I'd give Filipinos a place where they can experience all of that. I wanted to give them a place that spells a good time!"

Percy had seen the Baja Beach Club chain in many major international cities during her travels. After living most of her life in Holland, she decided to settle in Manila and breathe life into the nightscape. Thus, Baja Beach Club Manila was born.

The Baja Beach Club opening party will be held with Smirnoff Mule and E Channel.

The night will start off with an open bar from 9 to 11 p.m. and all you can drink beer for P200 after that.

With renowned Manila DJs Manolet Dario of NBK and TC of Traxx to pump up the crowds, the night will culminate with a wet bar dancing production number by the Hot Legs.

Freestyle goes in full swing

FROM its humble beginnings as a fledgling act in Davao to numerous rounds within Manila's live circuit, Freestyle now joins the local recording industry's A-list of bands.

The group, composed of Jinky Vidal (lead vocals), Tat Suzara (lead guitars), Top Suzara (lead vocals and guitars), Carlo Tapia (bass), Gerald Banzon (drums and percussion) and Nikki Cabardo (keyboards), never ceases to wow audiences.

On June 29 and 30, 8 p.m. at the Music Museum, celebrate, party and have a blast with today's hottest band in "fs2: Freestyle in Full Swing."

Join the fabulous six for two shows with your favorite songs, all-original compositions like "Before I Let You Go," "This Time," "Til I Found You" and a remake of "Bakit Ngayon Ka Lang?"

"fs2 :Freestyle in Full Swing" is a Dream Line production.

Call 891-5610 for details.

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Jon Voight
Daniel Craig
Lain Glen

June 28 - Thursday
3:40 PM - Tomb Raider
6:00 PM - Tomb Raider
8:20 PM - Tomb Raider
10:40 PM - Tomb Raider

Watch John Travolta, Hugh Jackman & Halle Berry log on, hack in, go anywhere and steal everything in SWORDFISH Opens July 4. Get amazed, marvel at the THX technology in this super sound-intensive movie Only at Louie's THX. Don't dare miss it!

Hear the Difference. Feel the Excitement

ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Updates on Sharon and KC

ONE of the big questions being asked on the entertainment scene these days is whether or not **Sharon Cuneta** has finally given the go signal for her daughter **KC** to follow her footsteps and become a show biz star.

From no less than Sharon herself on last week's "S-Files," the answer has finally come: Well, it depends!—Huh?

Yes, because she's permitted KC to accept a multi-million-peso offer for her to become the image model of Ben Chan's Human chain of stores.

Yes, because KC is playing a major role in the restaging of the musical version of "The Little Mermaid."

But, not yet because, as far as the movies are concerned, Mommy Sharon would prefer that KC hold off before accepting any of the many juicy offers she's received. Her hope is that KC will instead decide to study abroad.

Besides, when the talk turns to screen stardom, she thinks that KC would rather try her luck in Hollywood, rather than in our local photoplays.

And, even if KC would finally agree to act in a movie here, Sharon puts he foot down on her being part of a love team. "Look what happened to me *sa kaka*-love-team, love-team *ko*!," she wails.

Of course, veteran film fans remind Sharon that she started her recording and film career when she

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

was only 14 years old, so that makes 16-year-old KC an old woman by comparison.

But that's precisely Sharon's point: she feels that she made a big mistake when she entered show business before she was old enough to resist its many dizzying importunings, compelling her to get married at 18 and becoming a mother at 19.

Like any mother, she wouldn't want he daughter to make the same mistakes she did, so it would make her happy if KC held off for some more years before "going show biz" on a fulltime basis.

Of course, some people would tell her that mothers really can't protect their daughters from everything, that some mistakes have to be made on young show biz heiresses' road to their own superstardom.

Well, maybe when KC is 18? 21?—Older than that, never mind!

As for Sharon's own career, she's trying to lose more weight so she can shoot her third film with Robin Padilla. She may also make a movie with Vilma Santos. No, it won't be titled "The Senators' Wives" or "Future First Ladies"!

She continues to promote her new album. It's already gone gold, but Sharon is right, an album by a major star like her should hit single platinum, at least, to keep her competitive.

What about babies? Yes, Sharon would like to have another child, late next year. She still has to reenergize her film career, which has been sidetracked for too long a time by pregnancy, added poundage and politics.

Her last words on KC: singing is fine, but on-camera acting, only after studies abroad. She wants KC to experience the simple life of a student, far away from the show biz spotlight's heady, dazzling, intoxicating glare.

Take it from Mommy Sharon, who after 23 years in show business, has learned a lot about the way of all flash—and flash-in-the-pans.

Fine, but it seems that local show biz fans don't agree with Sharon about her decision to keep KC away from the cameras for some time longer: when Sharon guested on "Startalk" last Saturday, viewers were polled on the issue, and 591 wanted to see KC on the screen this year, as opposed to 76 who felt otherwise.

Will Sharon heed the viewing public's collective voice, or will she continue to trust her instincts as veteran star and mother?

Lonely hearts club band and love children

JUST asking:

- What's with **Jomari Yllana** and **Jackie Forster**? A friend of mine tipped me off that they were a coosome twosome in a nightspot lately. Maybe it was just a casual date. Could they be forming a lonely hearts club? Jom has split up with **Aiko** and Jackie has not found Mr. Right after **Benjie Paras**.
- Wonder if **Patrick Garcia** and **Cutie del Mar** will live up to the cliché that "in love, age does not matter?" They are said to be so smitten with each other. Oh well, anyone in love does not act, look or feel their age anyway.
- A reader e-mailed me to ask if **Jericho Rosales** is still in good terms with the non-showbiz girl (Kay?) with whom he has a lovechild. Insiders claim he does not provide for the baby. Is he too busy or just too wrapped up in his fame?
- My good friend **Adjeng Sarmiento**, who writes for MusicManila.com and I watched two interviews simultaneously being aired last Sunday. One featured clips from KOD shown on "The Buzz" of **Charlene Gonzales**'s interview with her hubby **Aga Muhlach**, and the other was **Janice de Belen**'s one-on-one interview with Aga on "S-Files." Adjeng told me her opinions in between commercials.

"I found Janice to be a sport, even daring to interview her ex-lover on national television about something as delicate as his new marriage," Adjeng said. "Ang however uncomfortable it might have

DOLLYWOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

been at some point, it was a welcome treat to a lot of viewers.

Charlene looked oblivious to the world and very much in love on her interview with Aga. It looked to me, though, that they were just being themselves, honeymooners *talaga*.

Aga really looked *kilig* and very much in love. It was really sweet to watch them. On the other end, if I were Janice, I wouldn't really know how to react in such an interview, having had to ask the father of my son such intriguing questions. It's just great that past is past for both of them, and there is nothing more to wish for but the best for each other.

I'm sure all of you out there have your own comments, too, regarding the two interviews. Wanna share them with Dollywood?

Another reader e-mailed me asking if the baby **Dino Guevarra** was cuddling in a mall is his second love child with the same non-showbiz girl. Someone in the know relayed to me that he overheard the girl tell Dino bluntly, "*Hoy,* Dino! *Panagutan mo naman 'to!*" Sounds like a line from a telenovela. Was she just taunting him or did she mean business?

Is there any truth to the rumor that **Geneva Cruz** walked out of **KC Montero**'s birthday bash because she got jealous of another female guest who was flirting with KC? I am not inclined to believe this because I happened to be in the same club that night. Gen and VJ **Belinda Panelo** even approached me. They seemed to be having a blast so I doubt if Gen made a French leave.

- When I heard about **Paco Arrespacochaga**'s brawl with the dad of his ex-girlfriend I was quite surprised to find out that it was not the American girl he introduced me to the last time I bumped into him in Watering Hole (my official headquarters). When, oh when will Paco finally find the perfect replacement for Geneva Cruz in his life?

Rendez out, Porter in

WELCOME **John Robert Porter Jr.**

John Robert Porter Jr (formerly known as John Rendez) is a brand new person this time around. As a singer . . . actor . . . and producer as well.

"Grown-up and more serious this time," Porter said confidently. As a singer, John Robert Porter Jr. wants to change his image from rugged to a more decent looking entertainer;

But as an actor, he wants to be packaged a la **Bruce Willis**.

"In my next movie, 'Alyas John Doe,' you'll see me doing a lot of hard routine like Bruce," he beams.

John as a singer-entertainer is on his own now via his latest album "Crossroads," with revivals of "Skyline Pigeon," "Wild World," "Easy," among others, and two original compositions, "Controversial" and "Why Can't We Ever Get Along."

For feedback, e-mail *wateringhole2000@yahoo.com*

Kuh sings Streisand in a dinner-concert

"KUH Sings Streisand" in a dinner-concert tomorrow night, June 29, at the Fiesta Pavilion of Manila Hotel.

The concert will feature Kuh with special guests Regine Velasquez, Chad Borja and Joey Generoso of the Side A band.

SHOWS

The evening's repertoire includes Streisand's classics like "People," "The Way We Were," "You Don't Bring Me Flowers" and "Some Good Things Never Last."

Kuh and her guests will be backed up by an 18-piece string ensemble and a session band.

The show is mounted by EE Concert Production as a benefit for the Asilo de San Vicente de Paul. It is sponsored by Lyric Piano.

Official concert stations are 93.9 KCFM, Joey@Rhythms 92.3, 96.3 WRock, 97.1 dwLS Campus Radio, 105.1 Crossover and 100.3 The Hive.

Tickets priced at P2,000, P1,500 and P750 are available at Manila Hotel, Republic of Malate, SM Ticketnet, Quality Optics (586 Quintin Paredes corner Ongpin st., Manila) and La Compagnie des Pests at Shangri-La Mall and Rockwell Power Plant Mall.

For more inquires, call Headline Concepts at 551-7252 to 55.

LEDESMA

98 Degrees at the Big Dome

THE POPULAR boy band 98 Degrees is ready to ignite Manila as they bring their "Revelation World Tour 2001" to the Araneta Coliseum, July 6, 8 p.m.

98 Degrees is a quartet of good-looking young men who have emerged as one of the most popular singing groups today. The band has played to sell-out crowds and sold multi-platinum albums all over the world.

The foursome is composed of Jeff Timmons, brothers Nick and Drew Lachey, and Justine Jeffree. They refuse to label themselves as an "overnight sensation" since they worked hard for their popularity.

98 Degrees churned out hits like "I Do (Cherish You)," "Because of You," "The Hardest Thing," "Thank God I Found You" (with Mariah Carey) and a movie theme with Gloria Estefan which went all the way to the top spot in the Billboard charts.

With the release of the band's new album, "Revelation," 98 Degrees has now joined international top acts like Backstreet Boys and N' Sync.

The group's new album under MCA Universal took off with the first single, "Give Me Just One Night (Una Noche)," followed by "My Everything."

Tickets to the Big Dome concert are available at SM Ticketnet. For inquiries and reservations, call 911-5555 or 911-4087.

98 DEGREES

Free concert

REGINE Velasquez mounts a free show at Robinson's Galleria, June 29, in line with the promotion of "Pangako, Ikaw Lang," the soundtrack album of her latest movie of the same title.

The Viva Records album turned gold a week after its release last May and its sales are fast reaching platinum.

The album's carrier single, "Pangako," is now enjoying the number one slot on Manila's OPM radio stations.

Regine is expected to sing some of her hit songs, as well as several tracks from her latest album such as "With a Smile," "Someone To Watch Over Me" and the title track, "Pangako."

There will be an autograph-signing right after the show.

FUNDRAISING CONCERT

Members of The Dawn gear up for a fundraising concert, 8 p.m., June 29 at the Malate Catholic Church Grounds. Also featured are saxophonist Eddie Katindig and violinist John Lesaca. The show aims to raise funds for the completion of the Remedios Jubilee Mission Center.

Escape at Suburbia

THEY'RE hip, they're cool and they've got a music vibe that skillfully brings together elements of snazzy R&B, funky acid jazz and soul.

Escape is continuously making waves with their new female frontliner Yosha, whose vocal prowess leaves audiences in awe with her stirring rendition of songs from Cece Peniston, Incognito, Christina Aguilera, Crystall Waters and D'Sound.

Joining Yosha on stage is male vocalist Rommel Lumanog whose takes on Stevie Wonder's "Overjoyed" and Color Me Badd's "Wild Flowers" will leave audiences in awe.

Other members of the group are bass guitarist Philip Arriola, guitarist Adam Cesante, drummer Kris Talatad and keyboardist Mike Velasco.

Catch Escape at Suburbia Malate every Wednesday.

ESCAPE

Crossover music in Bacolod

PIDO with Take One headed by Pido Esteves, plays acoustic '70s ballads, chart-topping hits, the best Crossover music and their original compositions from their latest CD under MCA-Universal.

The group is featured in "Crossover Live," the monthly musical presentation from Crossover 105.1, which spotlights Manila's best bands in special performances in the hippest venues all over the country.

This month, "Crossover Live" goes down South in a special show with Pido with Take One at Bacolod's North Bar and Restaurant, June 30.

Don't miss this exciting gig by tuning into 99.1 Crossover Bacolod.

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MILA - P13 12:10, 2:35, 5:00, 7:25, 9:50	EVOLUTION - P 13 11:10, 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00	TOMB RAIDER - P 13 12:20, 2:30, 4:40, 6:50, 9:00
TOMB RAIDER - P 13 10:55, 1:00, 3:10, 5:20, 7:30, 9:40	PEARL HARBOR - P 13 1:40, 5:20, 9:00	TOMB RAIDER - P 13 11:30, 1:40, 3:50, 6:00, 8:10, 10:20

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BUSINESS

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Manufacturing output up 13% in April

BY DORIS C. DUMLAO

FOR the first time this year, the country's manufacturing volume picked up by 12.7 percent in April, the highest monthly growth posted since December 2000.

But economists said the expansion in the volume of production index (VoPI), the benchmark for the performance of the local manufacturing sector, did not necessarily indicate a turnaround for the key sector and for the domestic economy in general.

The National Statistics Office yesterday reported that the VoPI stood at 148.3 in April from 131.6 of the same month last year, a respite from three months of consecutive slowdown. Six out of 16 sub-sectors posted annual increases, with electrical machinery and textile manufacturing recording the sharpest growth rates.

The rise in the manufacturing volume index, based on the NSO's Monthly Integrated Survey of Selected Industries, was also reflective of the improvement in bank lending as well as the country's export receipts for the period.

But Asian Development Bank senior economist Srinivasa Madhur yesterday said a single-month improvement in manufacturing volume as well as overall export performance did not mean that the domestic economy was on the road to recovery.

He said the ADB's latest Asia recovery report released yesterday even showed that domestic and external risks have even increased since the bank's last report in March.

"Generally, the way things are looking is becoming bleak now and most probably, growth should pick up early next year or in the latter part of this year," Madhur said.

"Even if this is good news, it might only be a blip," ATR Kim Eng Securities head of research Luz Lorenzo said. "Business sentiment improved before May but remember that after the attack on Malacañang on May 1, the level of confidence shrunk again, which was why we downgraded our (gross domestic product) growth outlook for the country from 3.8 percent to 2.9 percent for this year," Lorenzo said.

The government itself already scaled down its GDP growth target for the year to 3.3-3.8 percent from 3.8-4.3 percent.

GDP refers to the total amount of goods and services produced by the economy in a given year.

Based on the NSO report, electrical machinery manufacturing posted the highest increase of 42.6 percent, followed by textile with 34.3 percent. On the other hand, double-digit decreases were observed in wearing apparel (-16.1 percent), wood and wood products (-20.4 percent), transport equipment (-16.8 percent), paper and paper products (-15.4 percent), rubber products (-16.7 percent), other manufacturing industries (-15.3 percent), and tobacco (-23.8 percent).

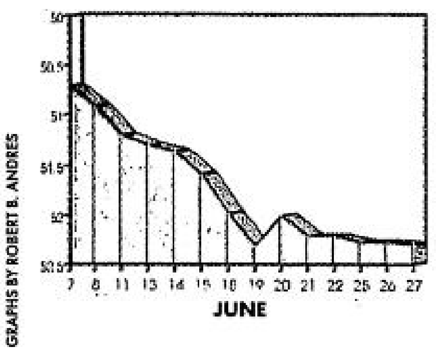
The value of net sales posted by the sector for April 2001 increased by 15.2 percent over the same month last year. There were 13 major sectors that exhibited growth in their value of net sales, led by petroleum refineries, basic metals, food manufacturing and textile.

In terms of total value, the production output of the manufacturing industry in April moved up by 21 percent. Sectors that significantly contributed to the favorable year-on-year performance in the value of production of the manufacturing industry were electrical machinery (60.1 percent), petroleum refineries (21.7 percent), textile (72.7 percent), wearing apparel (30.6 percent), non-metallic mineral products (22.3 percent) and miscellaneous manufactures (36.0 percent).

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO - DOLLAR



GRAPHS BY ROBERT B. ANDRES

Peso-Dollar Rate

₱ 52.295 = $1

As of 5 p.m.,
June 27, 2001

¥ 124.34 = $1

The US dollar was trading at 124.34 as of 5 p.m., June 27, 2001

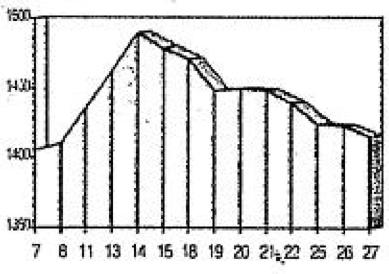
GOLD:$276.00/276.50

per ounce Hong Kong,
June 27, 2001

STOCK MARKET

Shares fall 0.5%

PSE Composite Index



(See stock market report on Page B2)

SHARE prices fell 0.5 percent yesterday, weighed down by a weak peso and security concerns over ex-President Joseph Estrada's corruption trial.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index lost 7.71 points to close at 1,415.73.

"People are playing it safe," said Fitzgerald Aclan of KGI Securities Inc.

"The market's weakness can be traced to investors being cautious over upcoming developments with Estrada's arraignment and the weaker peso," added Lawrence de Leon of Magnum International Securities.

Hundreds of riot police and troops have been placed on standby to thwart possible violence at the Sandiganbayan anti-graft court where Estrada was to appear later yesterday.

President Macapagal last week warned against an alleged plot by the political opposition to destabilize her government through massive street protests to coincide with Estrada's court appearance.

Volume turnover reached 861.78 million shares worth P480.03 million from Tuesday's 799 million shares worth P520.7 million. *AFP*

ADB unit sees slower growth

THE PHILIPPINE economy is expected to grow by only 2.6 percent this year, way below the downscaled 3.3-3.8 percent growth targeted by the government, according to the regional monitoring unit of the Asian Development Bank.

According to the June 2001 Asia Recovery Report (ARR) released by the ADB yesterday, the outlook for the Philippines and four other Asean countries hit by the Asian currency turmoil has worsened compared to the last review conducted in March.

The report particularly cited the continuing hostage-taking crisis in Mindanao as among the domestic risks which had been aggravating the poor investor sentiment on the Philippines.

"Despite a favorable outcome in the May elections for President Arroyo's party and approval of the crucial power sector reform bill, the recent hostage crisis has once again jolted investor confidence," the report said.

ADB senior economist Srinivasa Madhur said in an interview yesterday that although the resurgence of the Mindanao hostage crisis was itself not a big concern, the turmoil in the South was compounding

ADB/ B2

IMF lauds GMA policies

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

THE EXECUTIVE Board of the International Monetary Fund has commended the monetary and fiscal policy package presented by the Macapagal administration.

The policy package was the basis of the IMF's ongoing review of the country's economic performance.

Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura, who also serves as the country's chief negotiator with the IMF, said the Fund was impressed with the way the government was addressing its fiscal problems.

A ranking finance official added that the IMF was elated with the passage of the power bill, considered by foreign investors as one of the more important legislative reforms.

"They expressed positive views on the total policy package being pursued by the Macapagal administration," Buenaventura said of his meeting with the IMF review team.

Representatives of the IMF arrived last Friday and stayed until Tuesday to hold talks with the Macapagal economic team on the progress the country had made on issues such as the budget deficit, interest rates and inflation.

The IMF also updated the economic team on the generally positive feedback of the multilateral agency's Executive Board on the post-program monitoring scheme.

The country entered into a post-program monitoring with the IMF last April. The new program does not involve financial assistance although the country's compliance with the targets approved by the IMF would serve as a seal of "good housekeeping."

Buenaventura said the IMF was convinced that the government could manage its inflation and that the price index would go down during the second half from a rate of 6.5 percent last May.

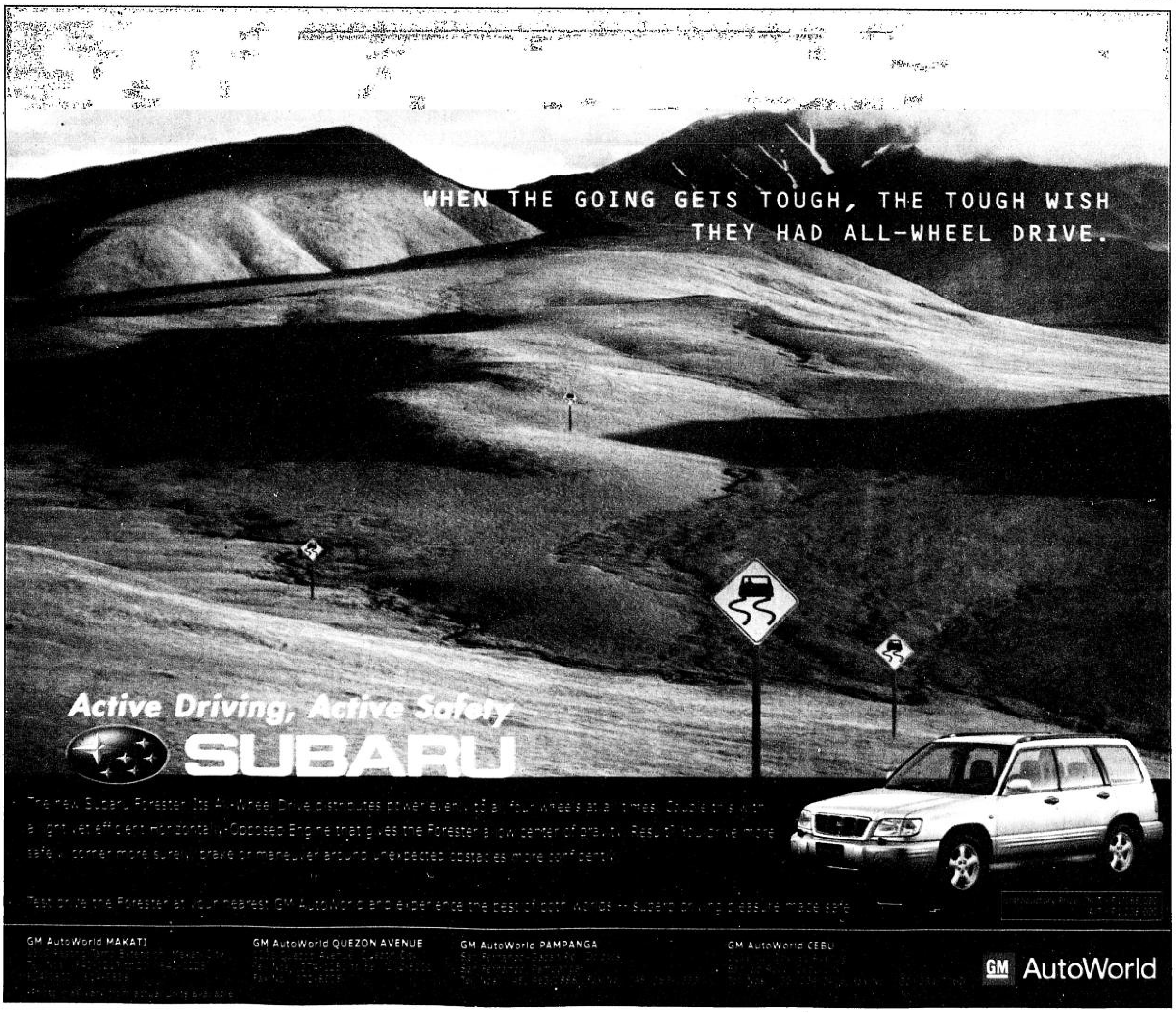
Last April, the IMF believed that inflation would peak at 8 percent between May and June.

While the IMF was comfortable with the lower-than-target budget deficit in the first five months of the year, the Fund was still concerned about the continued weakness in government earnings, particularly from the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

"They emphasized the need to improve the fiscal position although they were comfortable with the current level of the deficit," the BSP chief said.

The budget deficit as of May stood at P58.326

IMF/ B2


WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH, THE TOUGH WISH THEY HAD ALL-WHEEL DRIVE.
Active Driving, Active Safety
SUBARU
The new Subaru Forester. Its All-Wheel Drive distributes power evenly to all four wheels at all times. Couple this with a light yet efficient Horizontally-Opposed Engine that gives the Forester a low center of gravity. Result? You drive more safely, corner more surely, brake or maneuver around unexpected obstacles more confidently.
Test drive the Forester at your nearest GM AutoWorld and experience the best of both worlds -- superb driving pleasure made safe.
GM AutoWorld MAKATI
GM AutoWorld QUEZON AVENUE
GM AutoWorld PAMPANGA
GM AutoWorld CEBU
GM AutoWorld

Ex-Urban Bank exec sues Bangko Sentral, PDIC chiefs

By Elena R. Torrijos

FORMER Urban Bank Inc. president Teodoro Borlongan last Monday filed with the Office of the Ombudsman criminal and administrative cases against Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura and Philippine Deposit and Insurance Corp. president Norberto Nazareno.

In his 14-page complaint-affidavit, Borlongan accused Buenaventura and Nazareno of estafa and fraud under Articles 315 and 318 of the Revised Penal Code and of violating specific receivership provisions of Section 30 of the New Central Bank Act.

"PDIC, as the duly appointed receiver of UBI, orchestrated and facilitated Landbank's withdrawal after Urban Bank's closure. Even accrued interests were paid," Borlongan claimed.

Borlongan was referring to the P562.5 million worth of National Food Authority debt papers held by Urban Bank, which were allegedly bought by Landbank after the latter was ordered closed by the Monetary Board on April 26 last year. The debt papers were allegedly paid through a write off of portion of Landbank's P1.05-billion interbank loan to Urban Bank.

Landbank's withdrawal, Borlongan claimed, was the largest and real preferential withdrawal from Urban Bank.

Under the New Central Bank Act, the PDIC, as the bank's receiver, "shall not, with the exception of administrative expenditures, pay or commit any act that will involve the transfer or disposition of any asset of the institution."

In a sworn affidavit earlier filed with the Ombudsman, the BSP and PDIC said Urban Bank paid Landbank the disputed amount by way of "dacion en pago" or payment in kind arrangement.

Nazareno earlier said the transactions were all executed prior to the closure (of Urban Bank) and were legitimate.

Borlongan debunked this and stressed that the transaction could have only been consummated after the Monetary Board ordered Urban Bank's closure on April 26 last year.

He cited the improper and suspicious documents presented by the PDIC on the supposed outright purchase of the NFA notes by Landbank.

In a separate affidavit, former Urban Bank corporate secretary Corazon Bejasa said the PDIC was aware of the Landbank transaction and its irregularity since mid-May 2000.

Bejasa said that at that time she reminded a PDIC executive that a confirmation letter, dated April 25, 2000, covering the outright purchase by Landbank of the NFA promissory notes was not valid because there was only one signatory instead of two, as required.

In his complaint-affidavit, Borlongan also claimed that Buenaventura and Nazareno tried to "cover up the transaction with machinations, deceit and intimidation."

He said Buenaventura and Nazareno declared that the NFA notes that were sold to Landbank were the subject of double or triple sale.

"If Nazareno alleged that the notes were double-sold, then why did he allow the Landbank transaction?" Borlongan asked.

Last November, Borlongan filed a criminal complaint against Buenaventura and four other BSP officials for the alleged falsification of examination reports leading to the hasty closure of Urban Bank.

Early this week, Nazareno said that a PDIC management team has concluded that Urban Bank could be revived and reopened based on the rehabilitation plan proposed by Export Industry Bank and the National Association of Urban Bank and Urbancorp Depositors and creditors.

Nazareno said the proposed plan was deemed "viable" and would be presented to the PDIC board and the Monetary Board for approval.

Under the plan, EIB, a small commercial bank largely owned by the Philippine Exporters Confederation Inc., would merge with Urban Bank and Urbancorp to create an entity with P3.85 billion in capital funds.

IMF . . .

(From page B1)

billion against a target of P61.7 billion.

Buenaventura said the IMF also understood the recent volatility of the peso and attributed much of the weakness to regional trends. He said the Fund supported the Monetary Board's decision to keep interest rates at current levels.

He ruled out any increase in interest rates despite the continued weakness of the local currency. The peso yesterday closed at 52.295 from 52.28 last Tuesday.

A slight cause of concern, the central bank governor said, was the relatively high level of nonperforming loans of local banks which stood at 16.65 percent of their total portfolio as of April.

"The IMF asked us to closely monitor the banks' NPLs and to make efforts to reduce the bad loans," he said.

Buenaventura said there were no fiscal or monetary targets adjusted during the recent IMF visit. He said the government stood by its commitment to contain the budget deficit at P145 billion.

Textile firm gets relief

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE BOARD of Investments has granted an appeal by Indo Phil Cotton Mills Inc., one of the country's biggest textile millers, for a temporary reprieve on its export commitments because of rising production costs and intense competition with textile millers from Indonesia and China.

The BOI allowed Indo Phil to export less than half of its production for this year (40 percent) and next year (45 percent) provided that it makes up for the shortfall by shipping out as much as 70 percent from 2003 to 2006.

Indo Phil is obliged to ship out at least 50 percent of its production annually in order to remain eligible for the tax credit incentives as a BOI-registered company.

Indo Phil reported to the BOI that it was unable to meet its 50 percent export commitment in 1999 (49 percent) and 2000 (31 percent) because of adverse market conditions such as economic meltdown, high interest rate and overhead costs, and volatile exchange rate.

Indo Phil also blamed the quota restrictions of the Garments and Textile Export Board for its woeful export performance.

Indo Phil claimed that it could not sell to the US market despite confirmed orders from American buyers because the GTEB declined to give them additional quota for yarns and fabrics.

Indo Phil has pledged to invest P100 million this year to upgrade its machinery and equipment to boost product quality and maintain its share in the international market. Indo Phil said that it is handicapped against its rivals from Indonesia and China because their raw materials were available locally unlike the Philippines where all inputs are imported.

In granting Indo Phil's request, the BOI cited the similar relief granted to Shell Philippines Petroleum Corp. and San Miguel Yamamura Ball Corp. which were allowed to have a temporary reduction in their export commitment on condition that they would offset these shortfall in the future.

DISCLOSURES

BENPRES Holdings Corp. denied reports that the Supreme Court had rejected **Bayantel**'s petition for a review of the Court of Appeals' decision revoking its permit to construct, install, operate and maintain a nationwide cellular mobile telephone service.

***

MIC Holdings Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on July 18, 2 p.m., at the MIC Holdings Corp. Conference Room, 3rd floor, Athanaeum Bldg., Salcedo Village, Makati City.

***

THE ANNUAL stockholders' meeting of **ATN Holdings Inc.** will be held on July 12, 4 p.m., at the Function Room of the Makati Sports Club, Salcedo Village, Makati City.

***

ITOGON-SUYOC Mines Inc. has advised the Philippine Stock Exchange of a modification in its previous disclosure regarding its expansion. It reads: "Amendment of articles of incorporation for the expansion of the secondary purposes of the corporation to include information technology or telecommunication and other similar business."

***

MONDRAGON International Philippines Inc. said that Clark Development Corp. has granted Mondragon Leisure and Resorts Corp. the authority to have access to its financial records.

***

ELECTED as officers of **Apex Mining Co. Inc.** were Raymund Puyat, president; Eric Tagle, special assistant to the president; Feliciano dela Cruz, EVP for finance and administration; Benedicto Jalandoon, VP for operations; Leonardo Gayao, corporate secretary; and Clarence Gurerrero, assistant corporate secretary.

***

THE BOARD of **Ionics Inc.** approved the declaration of cash dividend amounting to P0.15 per share or an aggregate of P64,453,124.40 from its unrestricted retained earnings as of Dec. 31, 2000.

***

THE ANNUAL stockholders' meeting of **Island Information and Technology Inc.** was reset from July 16 to Aug. 2 to provide the company ample time to send the information statement to its stockholders.

***

ABACUS Consolidated Resources and Holdings Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on July 16, 9 a.m., at the Angono Room, Valle Verde Country Club, Pasig City.

***

THE ANNUAL stockholders' meeting of **A Brown Co. Inc.** will be held on July 20, 2 p.m., at the Sacramento Valley Resort, Tanay, Rizal.

Compiled by Armin P. Adina, PDI Research

Sun Life Prosperity Funds: Positive Growth in First Year

The past year has burdened the Philippines with a confluence of backbreaking events. The Asian crisis, Juetengate, the Erap impeachment trial and People Power II congregated to pummel the Philippine economy to a pulp, leaving in their wake, badly battered and bruised companies praying that the worst is over. Understandably, the past year was hardly a time to gamble capital on any business venture. Despite the odds, however, Sun Life Financial dared to undertake a bold move by introducing into Philippine shores the Sun Life Prosperity Funds, a unique family of mutual funds composed of: the Sun Life Prosperity Bond Fund, the Sun Life Prosperity Philippine Equity Fund, and the Sun Life Prosperity Balanced Fund. Tasked to shepherd and manage these funds through these turbulent times is the Sun Life Asset Management Co., Inc., a fully owned subsidiary of Sun Life of Canada Philippines, Inc., a member of the Sun Life Financial group of companies. With its stable of seasoned investment managers and Chartered Financial Analysts, the Sun Life Prosperity Funds was able, in just one year, to establish a foothold in the mutual fund industry. With its superb performance, it is now poised to be one of the leaders of the industry.

First Year Performance

In its first year, the family of Sun Life Prosperity Funds have already inscribed themselves in the minds of the investing public. In a mere twelve (12) months from the start of their operations, the funds have been able to attract some P 520.87 Million in fresh investments. They are poised to top this considering that they have already attracted investments in the amount of P 427.60 Million in just the first four months of the year 2001. In fact, the Bond, Balanced and Philippine Equity Funds of Sun Life Prosperity Funds already topped the year-to-date net sales in the mutual fund industry. More significant though, than the amount of investments the funds are able to attract, is the fact that among all mutual fund companies in the Philippines, the Sun Life Prosperity Funds had the lowest redemption rates as of the end of April 2001. This is a clear statement that investors believe in this family of funds, and the people behind them.

According to Mr. Rolly Robles, President of Sun Life Asset Management Co., Inc., this phenomenal rise of the Sun Life Prosperity Funds is due in part to three factors: the strong and felt need of Filipinos to prepare for future financial obligations; the growing interest of the public to explore investment as a solution for these needs; and the trust that people have placed upon Sun Life Philippines to deliver on its commitments.

Long Term Financial Goals of Filipinos

Mr. Robles explains that, "foremost among Filipinos is the desire to provide their children with the best possible education and, having done that, to retire comfortably. In addition, many Filipinos dream of leaving a legacy for their heirs by enhancing the growth of their wealth." He adds further that, "Filipinos are now more conscious about preparing for their future as well as various ways they can do it."

Mr. Robles adds that, "most Filipinos are quite familiar with financial packages with guaranteed features and benefits and they use these to prepare for their long term goals. Lately, however, a growing number of Filipinos are starting to see the benefits of investing in variable return instruments like mutual funds to build wealth for their future financial needs."

"They now realize that guaranteed benefits may not be sufficient to meet their future financial needs because inflation erodes the value of their returns. It has become apparent to them that significant gains can be realized by investing in securities like bonds and stocks." This is where a mutual fund comes in. "Mutual funds," says Mr. Robles, "pools together the funds of people and with the help of a professional team of investment managers, these are invested directly in the securities market so that they can have the opportunity for better long term returns on their investment."

Basic Advantages

One of the major advantages of investing in the Sun Life Prosperity Funds is the reputation and high-level of competence of their investment manager, Sun Life Asset Management Co., Inc., SLAMC, as it is most commonly called, has a highly skilled and well-trained team of investment managers. These investment managers have been handling over P 23.0 Billion worth of assets of Sun Life Philippines. Likewise, presently employed in their ranks are 3 of the country's 21 CFA (Chartered Financial Analyst) charterholders, a designation that is recognized internationally for its commitment to professional integrity.

A second advantage of Sun Life Prosperity Funds is the extensiveness of their distribution network. According to Mr. Robles, "our crown jewel are our distributors. As of the end of 2000, we (SLAMC) have 196 of the 426 licensed mutual fund representatives in the Philippines." Perhaps revealing how sensitively they regard the investing public, Mr. Robles adds that, "Because we deal with other people's money, we do not allow anyone to get into this (offering shares of the mutual funds to the public) without having a license." These licensed mutual fund representatives are also trained to be competent investment planners to help clients make intelligent decisions regarding their investments.

A third advantage is the easy transfer of one's investments from one fund to another at no cost. This ability to move investments allows for the ready diversification of the investment portfolio of an investor. This is especially important considering that even Mr. Robles says that, "diversification is one of the keys to good investing."

A fourth advantage is the internal infrastructure of SLAMC. As part of the service offered by SLAMC is a call center where people can inquire about the funds, what it is all about as well as the performance of their own accounts. This unique facility allows for quick and easy monitoring of their investments. Another internal structure, which enhances the reliability of SLAMC is the fact that its internal processes are highly regulated. Compliance with Philippine Law as well as the global ethical standards and quality structures of all members of the Sun Life Financial group of companies is always ensured and safeguarded.

With the passage of a year, Sun Life Financial sees itself as a partner of the Filipino in the planning and preparation for their futures. As Mr. Robles says, "we are looking at this business as a long-term venture." Seemingly like a mantra, Mr. Robles ends by saying that, "the future is always there. It is what we do today to prepare for it that matters." And what better way to prepare than to have an enlightened financial partner illuminate your path.

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Wednesday, June 27, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Bank of the Phil. Islands	74	74	73.5	74	123,900
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	38	38	38	38	102,800
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	211	211	203	205	366,340
Philippine National Bank	43.5	44.5	43	43	37,600
Phil. Savings Bank	29	30	29	30	9,000
Security Bank Corp.	19.75	20.5	19.75	20.5	1,400
Union Bank of the Phil.	26	26	25.5	25.5	1,600
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	200,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	237	237	230	237	530
Manulife Financial Corp.	1360	1365	1360	1365	3,570
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1160	1165	1160	1165	4,440
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	39.5	39.5	39.5	39.5	5,600
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	1,330,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	660	670	650	650	6,730
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	105,660,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	15,000
Piltel	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	104,000,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	705	705	700	705	63,510
Ivantage Corp.	0.84	0.85	0.84	0.85	160,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.039	0.04	0.038	0.039	116,100,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	39	39	38.5	39	71,100
Manila Electric Co. B	56	56	55.5	56	370,100
Petron Corp.	2.1	2.12	2.08	2.1	884,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	250,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.46	2.46	2.36	2.4	3,738,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Union Cement Corp.	1.16	1.18	1.16	1.16	3,585,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	4.2	4.3	4.1	4.25	992,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13.5	13.5	13.25	13.25	297,600
La Tondena Distillers Inc.	26.5	27	26.5	27	164,500
RFM Corp.	1.5	1.56	1.44	1.48	1,476,000
Swift Food, Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	10,000
San Miguel Corp. A	42	42.5	42	42.5	17,500
San Miguel Corp. B	47.5	47.5	46.5	47.5	414,700
Vitarich Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	100,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Atok-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	7.5	7.6	7.5	7.6	2,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.78	0.78	0.77	0.78	130,000
Ayala Corp.	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.1	111,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.42	1.42	1.42	1.42	65,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	10.75	11	10.75	10.75	400
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	1.28	1.4	1.24	1.24	5,561,000
APC Group Inc.	0.165	0.165	0.165	0.165	50,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.006	0.0065	0.006	0.0065	10,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	400,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	12	12.5	12	12.5	13,400
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	100,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.62	1.62	1.56	1.56	5,605,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.29	0.31	0.29	0.3	3,870,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	800,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	269,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	27.5	27.5	27	27	268,400
Global Equities Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	50,000
Guoco Holdings (Phils.)	0.19	0.22	0.19	0.22	110,000
Ionics Inc.	11	11	10.75	11	119,700
Ipeople Inc.	1.18	1.18	1.14	1.14	256,000
Ipeople Inc. B	1.14	1.18	1.14	1.16	69,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	2.16	2.16	2.08	2.08	384,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.017	700,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.76	0.76	0.76	0.76	20,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.48	0.48	160,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	390,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	700,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.32	0.4	0.32	0.39	70,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.25	0.26	0.25	0.26	40,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Interphil Labs Inc. A	0.82	0.82	0.82	0.82	435,000
Music Corp.	2	2	1.94	1.94	410,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.67	0.69	0.67	0.67	220,000
Central Azucar Don Pedro	0.88	0.88	0.88	0.88	60,000
Spi Technologies Inc.	15	15.25	14.75	14.75	189,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	100,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.43	0.43	0.42	0.42	1,120,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.59	0.59	0.57	0.57	1,640,000
Manila Jockey Club	18	18	18	18	37,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.32	0.34	0.32	0.33	520,000
Philippine Racing Club	5	5.1	5	5.1	1,027,000
BONDS, PREFFERED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	40	40	40	40	366,100
DMCI Holdings Inc.- Pref.	500	500	495	495	7,310
Globe Telecom Hldg (Pdr)	680	680	680	680	200
Jollibee Warrants	13	13	13	13	45,000
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	41,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,000
Philweb.Com,Inc -Warrants	0.028	0.03	0.028	0.029	95,400,000
OTHERS					
Far Eastern University	470	470	470	470	10
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.4	5.5	5.4	5.5	2,493,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	10,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	20,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	980,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.3	0.31	0.29	0.29	1,900,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.31	0.32	15,240,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.38	1,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.22	2.24	2.22	2.24	1,160,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	60,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	10,000
SM Development Corp.	0.77	0.77	0.77	0.77	20,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.3	6.3	6.2	6.2	5,983,000
Universal Rightfield Prop	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	1,500,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	5,000,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc B	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	8,000,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	20,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.0525	0.0575	0.049	0.05	169,400,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines B	0.0575	0.0575	0.05	0.0525	7,400,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	40,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	500,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	13,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004	48,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.36	0.41	0.36	0.41	2,040,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.38	0.43	0.38	0.43	4,310,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.02	0.022	0.02	0.021	9,900,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	10,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	5,000,000
Pacifica	0.015	0.016	0.015	0.015	15,600,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	600,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	40,000

CURRENCIES

June 27, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.158346	1.000000	52.3070
Japan	Yen	0.009354	0.008075	0.4224
United Kingdom	Pound	1.639407	1.415300	74.0301
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.148697	0.128370	6.7146
Switzerland	Franc	0.656286	0.566572	29.6357
Canada	Dollar	0.763980	0.659544	34.4988
Singapore	Dollar	0.637014	0.549934	28.7654
Australia	Dollar	0.601113	0.518941	27.1442
Bahrain	Dinar	3.072699	2.652661	138.7527
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.308893	0.266667	13.9486
Brunei	Dollar	0.634606	0.547855	28.6567
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000102	0.000088	0.0046
Thailand	Baht	0.025633	0.022129	1.1575
UAE	Dirham	0.315453	0.272331	14.2448
Korea	Won	0.000892	0.000770	0.0403
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.863300	45.1566
Germany	Mark	0.511292	0.441398	23.0882
France	Franc	0.152450	0.131609	6.8841
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453780	0.391748	20.4912
Austria	Schilling	0.072672	0.062738	3.2816
Belgium	Franc	0.024790	0.021401	1.1194
Italy	Lire	0.000517	0.000446	0.0233
Finland	Markka	0.168188	0.145197	7.5948
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.004306	0.2252
Spain	Peseta	0.006011	0.005189	0.2714
Luxembourg	Franc	0.024790	0.021401	1.1194
Ireland	Punt	1.269738	1.096165	57.3371

ADB unit . . .

(From page B1)

the economic uncertainties hounding the Philippines.

During the ADB's March Asian recovery review, the forecast for Philippine GDP growth, based on the projection made by London-based think tank Consensus Economics Inc., was slightly higher at 2.7 percent although the ADB's official projection is still at 3 percent.

"Since the release of the March ARR, downside risks to the region's growth—both external and domestic—have increased somewhat. On the external front, recent data from US, Japan and Europe suggest further downward drift," the June ARR said.

The report said this month's report from the Federal Reserve Board in the US suggested that the economy was barely growing and suffering from weaknesses across many industrial sectors.

"Emerging economic trends in Japan are not encouraging either. Some analysts caution that the economy may have already slipped into its fourth recession in a decade," the report said.

"Europe, which only a few months ago was expected to post robust growth, is now showing clear signs of slowing close on the heels of the US. The European Central Bank has cautioned that the troubled international environment might deliver a bigger-than-expected blow," it said.

Among the five crisis-affected countries, the report said Korea and Malaysia were likely to see the sharpest slowdowns, reflecting their high dependence on exports, the US market, and global electronics demand.

Intel Corp. starts training program for educators

By Abigail Ho

LEADING microchip producer Intel Corp. has earmarked $100 million for its global training initiative aimed at covering 400,000 high school teachers in computer technology.

Part of the $100 million will be used to train over 20,000 public and private school teachers in the Philippines in the next two years. Intel Philippines country manager Ricky Banaag, however, refused to say the exact amount earmarked for the Philippines.

"We do not take the Philippines' chunk of the whole amount in dollar value. We measure it in terms of the number of teachers to be trained because amounts may vary from one country to another,'' he said.

This initiative dubbed "Teach to the Future" is aimed at training teachers in fundamental computer principles that can be used in their day-to-day teaching activities, like creating spreadsheets for students' grades and using the Internet as a research tool.

"In today's world dominated by the Internet and e-business, it is important for students to learn technology and math skills in the classroom. However, technology in the classroom is most advantageous when teachers know how to use it effectively," Intel Asia-Pacific vice president and general manager Christian Morales said.

According to a survey published in Merrill Lynch's Book of Knowledge, only 20 percent of today's 3.17 million teachers worldwide feel prepared to effectively incorporate technology in the classroom. There is also a lack of access to computers.

Get expert solutions to your baldness problem at SVENSON

Ms. Helen Y. Sia
Svenson Manager

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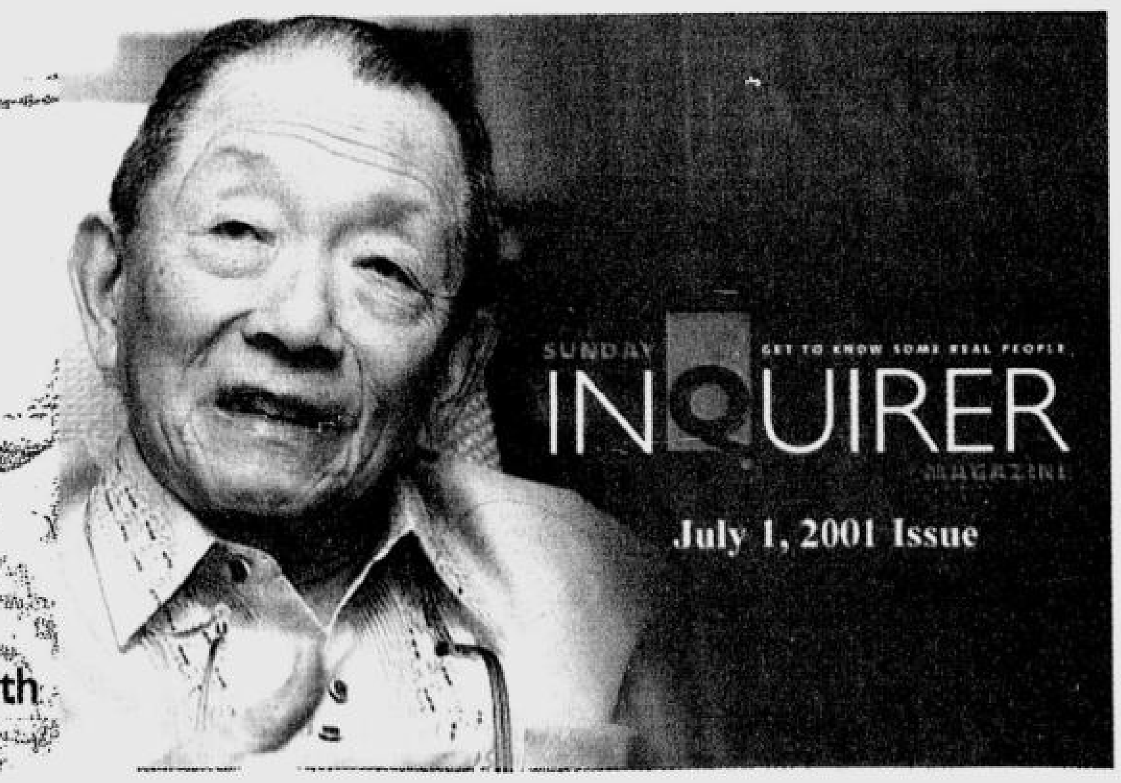

SUNDAY INQUIRER MAGAZINE
GET TO KNOW SOME REAL PEOPLE
July 1, 2001 Issue

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate & deposit accounts of the late MARIANO E. VILLALOBOS were extrajudicially settled by his heirs as per Doc. No. 62, Page No. 14, Book No. 17, Series of 2001 before Notary Public Sabino G. Ramos, Las Pinas City (PDI-June 28,July 5&12,2001)

PERSONAL

PRAYER TO BLESSED MOTHER (NEVER KNOWN TO FAIL)

O most beautiful flower of Mount Carmel, fruitful vine splendor of Heaven, Blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in this necessity, Oh star of the sea help me and show me herein you are my mother. Oh Mary, Holy Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth, I humbly beseech You from the bottom of My Heart to succor me in this necessity there are none that can withstand Your power. Oh show me herein You are Mother.

Oh Mary, conceived without sin. Pray for us who have recoursed to thee (3x).

Sweet Mother, I place this cause in Your hands (3x).

Thank you for Your mercy toward me and mine.

Thank you Mama Mary for answering my prayers. Amen. *(This prayer must be said for three days and after three days, your request will be granted and the prayer must be published.)*

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The **PHILIPPINE MORTUARY ASSOCIATION, INC.**

regrets to announce the demise of its co-founder

ANTONIO "TONY" RAMOS DYCHANGCO

Chairman, Capitol Memorial Chapels
Chairman, Funeraria Popular de San Pablo

Died in the Grace of our Lord
on June 24, 2001 at the age of 66.

His bereaved wife **EMY**; children **BENJIE & MARIVIC, BENHUR, BENNY & ALICE** and **BENNET**; grandchildren **BORGY, IAN, NIGE, JASCHA & HANNA**; brother & sisters, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the ZEUS Chapel of Capitol Memorial Chapels, 739 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, June 30, 2001 at the Eternal Gardens Memorial Park, Baesa, Quezon City after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

"Jesus Christ said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life.
He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.
And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die."

John 11:25-26

ANITA AMADO KARGANILLA

Peacefully joined her Creator on June 23, 2001
at the age of 35.

She will be most missed by her loving husband **Bernard**; parents **Benny** and **Enyang**; twin sister **Blanca**; sister **Amie**; brothers **Larry** and **Rogie**; parents-in-law **Bal** and **Angie**; sisters-in-law **Lyne, Sinag, Myra, Melai** and **Wowie**; brothers-in-law **John, Al, Alvin, Jun** and **Warren**; nieces **Raya, Deska** and **Myka**; and nephews **Genki** and **Joachim**.

She lies in state at Chapel C-1, La Funeraria Paz, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

There will be Holy Mass at 8:00 AM and Christian Services at 9:00 AM and 10:00 AM on June 30, 2001. Cremation will be at 11:00 AM.

"Let not grief overwhelm us or a sense of loss embitter us;
But out of our sadness, let there arise a new joy for so much given to us."

PRECIOSA NUEVO Vda. de SABALZA

Has joined her husband, Engr. FLORENTINO P. SABALZA (†)
and our Creator on June 27, 2001 at the age of 93.

Her loving son **MANNY**; and daughter-in-law **JOY**; grandchildren **MELANIE** and **WATU FORONDA, DR. MICHAEL** and **JO ANNE SABALZA** and **JING** and **JV ALDE**; loving niece **VIRGIE P. NUEVO**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Parish of the Holy Sacrifice, U.P. Campus, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, June 30, 2001 after the 8:00 AM Requiem Mass. Burial follows at Holy Cross Memorial Park, Novaliches.

Dr. Jose "Pepe" Roldan Cruz

Peacefully joined his Creator
on June 25, 2001 at the age of 91.

His loving wife **Emilia Panganiban**; children **Josefina** and **Benjamin Pecache, Jose Jr. "Lito"** and **Ma. Paz Licauco, Edgardo** and **Zenaida Baluyut, Victoria** and **Caesar Rasalan**; grandchildren **Lissa** and **Jona, Pattie, Tina** and **Mike, Joel, Anna** and **PM, Mari, Karen** and **Lloyd, Gary, Mike, Ria**; great grandchildren **EJ, Derrick, Andrea, Clarissa, David**; relatives and friends request the pious readers for their prayers.

His remains lie in state at the Santuario de San Jose Mortuary, Greenhills, Mandaluyong City.

Interment will be at the Manila South Cemetery in Makati on Saturday, June 30, 2001 after the 8:30 a.m. Mass.

JUANA M. YUMANG

June 24, 1920 - June 26, 2001

Survived by her husband **Councilor Virgilio C. Yumang**, children and children-in-law, grandchildren, brother, nephews, nieces, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to say a little prayer for the repose of her soul.

The body lies in state at their residence in Brgy. Nabuslat, Pinamalayan, Oriental Mindoro.

Interment will be at Pinamalayan Catholic Cemetery on June 30, 2001.

Our Dearly Beloved Nanay

CONSOLACION RIVERA ROMERO

Peacefully joined her Creator
*and our beloved **Tatay Felixberto Lozada Romero***
on June 27, 2001 at the age of 87.

Her loving children **Elenita & Larry Ganal, Tony & Myrna, Ike & Celing, Fred & Lilian, Vicente & Lilia Salazar, Nardy (†) & Georlyn, Glory & Johnny Hernia, Adonis (Boy) & Sylvia**; grandchildren, great grandchildren, relatives & friends request pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at their residence at Linabuan Norte, Kalibo, Aklan.

Interment will be on July 4, 2001.

In Loving Memory

on the 2nd Death Anniversary of

SANDIGAN BAYAN JUSTICE ALFREDO JAVELONA GUSTILO

(January 24, 1934 - June 28, 1999)

His wife and children request relatives, friends and the pious readers to include Fred in their prayers.

Masses are offered at:

His Mausoleum at Manila Memorial Park Garden Estate Annex-I, Parañaque City	8:30 AM
St. John Bosco Parish Pasay Road, Makati City	6:30 AM
Sanctuary of St. Paul the Apostle St. Paul Road, SAV, Makati City	6:15 AM
Parish Church of the Resurrection BF Parañaque City	6:30 AM
San Antonio Parish, SAV-I Parañaque City	6:00 AM

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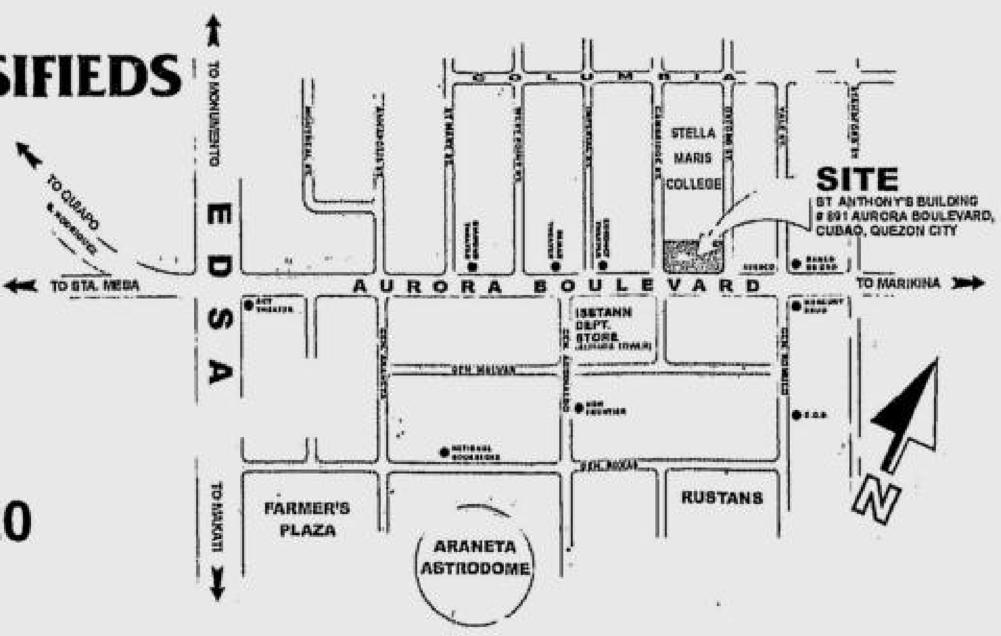

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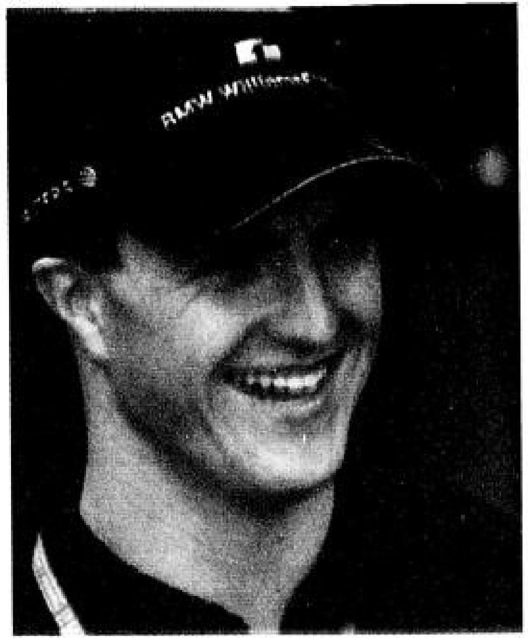
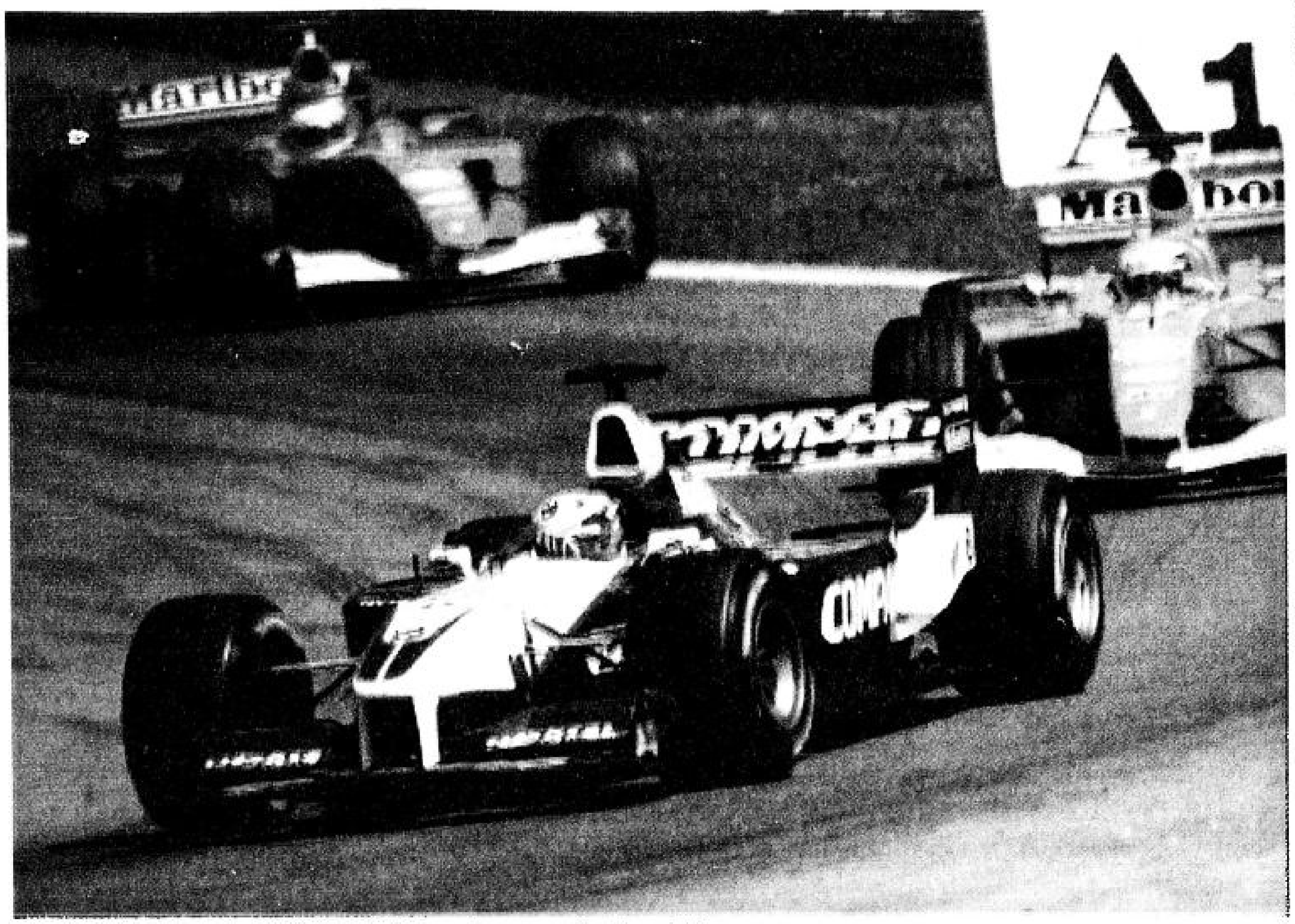
Has Williams BMW dislodged McLaren Mercedes?

BY VERNON B. SARNE

THE MOST fearsome sight in Formula One today



RALF Schumacher has been grinning all season



TWO Ferraris chasing a Williams BMW has become a familiar sight

NO less than three-time world champion Michael Schumacher thinks that as the races progress in the ongoing Formula One World Championship, it's becoming more and more evident that it's no longer "silver versus red" in the highest motorsport discipline.

According to the superstar Ferrari driver, it seems F1 is now about "white and blue versus red," referring of course to the impressive resurgence of the Williams BMW team as a third force to reckon with. Gone are the days when Formula One was a boring two-way fight between McLaren Mercedes and Ferrari, which always left the rest of the field qualifying for the third row of the starting grid and racing for a fourth-place finish at best.

With nine races already a foregone conclusion in the 2001 season, Williams BMW is striking fear in the hearts of the competition and causing panic attacks in Ferrari chief Jean Todt and McLaren principal Ron Dennis. While Ferrari is comfortably nestled at the top of the constructors championship with 94 points, erstwhile powerhouse McLaren is seriously threatened for the second spot with 53 points to Williams' 37. Even more overwhelming is the fact that in nearly all the races in which one or two Williams drivers were able to finish, they either won the race or placed second. They are that dominant—so long as they behave on the track and don't encounter any mechanical trouble.

Ralf Schumacher has already won two races (San Marino and Canada) and Juan Pablo Montoya has scored a pair of runner-up finishes (Spain and Nurburgring). Ralf also finished fifth in Malaysia and fourth in Nurburgring. The two Williams cars have also been regular fixtures on the front row of the grid. In no race is this more apparent than in last Sunday's European Grand Prix when the two BMW P80 V10-engined FW23s lined up the grid at second and third, easily dislodging the second Ferrari of Rubens Barrichello and both the McLarens of Mika Hakkinen and David Coulthard.

Put any of the two FW23 cars in a straight-line sprint with either a Ferrari or a McLaren, and you'll see the big difference BMW power makes. It's not every day you see a Ferrari being overtaken effortlessly—as Montoya did to Schumacher in Brazil—or a McLaren being made to eat the dust—as Ralf did to Coulthard and even brother Michael in Canada.

Although preseason press information listed the two Williams BMW FW23s at the middle of the pack in terms of horsepower, the white-and-blue racers are zooming past just about anyone on the track with stunning power and enviable fuel economy. They are also said to have the highest-revving motors in all of F1 at 18,000 rpm.

Aside from the excellent FW23 chassis and the powerful BMW V10 engine, credit also goes to the Michelin tires the Williams car is shod with. The French tiremaker is back in Formula One after a 13-year absence.

Ralf Schumacher's victory in San Marino was his first in 70 races and Williams' first after a 3-year, 54-race drought. Ralf is now fourth in the drivers championship with 25 points, behind Michael Schumacher's 68, Coulthard's 44, and Barrichello's 26. Montoya is fifth with 12 points.

The Williams team last won the constructors championship in 1997, when its driver Jacques Villeneuve also took home the drivers title. They also won the constructors and the drivers championships in 1996 with Damon Hill. Both years, the team was powered by Renault. In all, the team has nine constructors championships proudly tucked under its belt. Williams joined Formula One in 1975, the same year both Ralf Schumacher and Juan Pablo Montoya were born.

It is not preposterous to predict that at the rate things are going, Williams BMW will win another constructors championship and produce another champion driver in the next couple of years.

The boys in white and blue are clearly the drivers of the hour.

CR-V buyers get special treat this month

BUYERS of Honda CR-V, the only comfortable runabout vehicle, now comes with free spare tire cover and alarm system until June 30. In a surprise move to enhance sales of the popular SUV, Honda announced the special promotion that covers all its authorized dealers across the country.

The Honda CR-V is propelled by a 2.0-liter DOHC powerplant that churns out 150 ps maximum power, and mated to the reliable Realtime 4WD system known to give a truly smooth drive. Thanks to its 4-wheel double wishbone suspension system that is tailored to provide greater stability, the CR-V ensures superb handling and comfort unparalleled by any SUVs. Its safety features include clear visibility due to its expansive windows and slim pillars, a body capable of absorbing collision impact from all directions, and the 3-point ELR seatbelts with pretensioner complemented by dual SRS airbags. The CR-V's spacious interior provides greater legroom and is complemented by its famed center walk-through.

Standard to the CR-V is the overhead reading lamps, power door mirror switch. Kenwood 2-din radio-cassette-CD stereo with handy remote control, rear windshield wipers and high mount stop light.

Equipped with class-leading features that perfectly balance its car-like comforts and its SUV characteristics, the Honda CR-V comes in a wide range of colors to choose from: taffetta white, dark emerald green, heathermist silver, ruby red and passion orange.

Must for motorcycle drivers

RIDING a bike is a fun, exciting and practical way to get around. However, it's also quite a risky activity. The MUST 2001 Handbook, your guide to Metro Manila's streets, highways and byways, gives some safety tips so that these road risks can be minimized and avoided. Take them to heart, it may just save you from trouble down the road:

- **Always wear a helmet**—Aside from protecting your head, a helmet is the best way to keep dust, dirt, rain, insects and debris away from your eyes. Wearing a face shield is recommended if you wear glasses, to prevent them from being blown off. Shatterproof shields are best in the eventuality of an accident; you must not run the additional risk of having shattered glass pieces in your eyes.
- **Position**—Sitting erect helps in better driving. Try not to sit at a distance from the handle, as it will inhibit quick reaction when you need to veer away in the opposite direction, or make other directional changes. Hold handgrips firmly so that you do not lose control if you happen to skid or have to stretch while driving. Position your foot firmly on the foot pegs.
- **Carrying loads**—Proper positioning and fastening of the load is a must. Try to keep the load light and low and put them all in one bag for easy manageability. Checking it at every stop for proper fastening and positioning is also a must. The load should not be kept behind the rear wheel to avoid affecting the center of gravity and balancing of the vehicle. If the load is too heavy, imbalance is always a possibility. Also, an uneven load will cause the bike to lean on one side, making it dangerous. It is extremely important to go through the owner's manual before carrying any kind of load on your bike.
- **Passengers**—Being an experienced driver is a must before you can start carrying passengers. Your motorcycle should also be equipped to carry passengers other than you. Take it slow initially so you can adjust to your passenger's weight. It will help if your co-rider is seated directly behind you, and after you've started the bike. Lastly, modifying your suspension to withstand additional weight and checking tire pressure are also a must.
- **Braking properly**—A two-wheeler has two brakes: the front and the rear. The front is operated by the right hand, the rear by the right foot. Both are needed to stop effectively. As for how to apply brakes, there is no set rule. It will help if you squeeze the front brake first, then press down the rear brake, with increasing pressure. Brake gently and with caution when you need to take a turn while braking. Use both the brakes. Remember to check your brakes every time you take your bike for a drive.
- **Ride smartly and defensively**—Three-fourths of all two-wheeler accidents involve collisions with automobiles. They happen because the driver of the car did not see the two-wheeler. That is why it pays to be aware of what the other vehicle operators are doing—or might do—when-you ride. Use your headlight, avoid other drivers' "blind spots," don't make rapid lane changes and be prepared to use your horn so you can be certain other drivers see you..

Significance of Southwest-Hyundai deal

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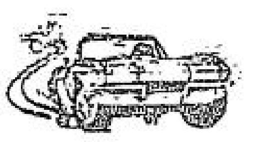
Al S. Mendoza



THEY have finally started fixing the holes on East Avenue, Quezon City, and that irritating, gaping hole on the Elliptical Road of the Quezon Memorial Circle in front of Visayas Avenue, also in Quezon City. This, after I had prodded authorities to jail road-diggers who leave their jobs after doing the diggings in a column I did here last week.

Those holes had been there for months. I hope the repairs are for real. Monday night, they were still repairing that one on East Avenue. I am impressed.

But come to think of it, fellas. There really ought to be a law penalizing road diggers who fail to complete their work on time.

With barely a week before the opening of Congress, isn't it about time that our legislators start drafting bills addressing this malady?

I call on the new lawmakers to take the lead. This should be a good start for you, fellas.

If you still don't know it, much of the city's traffic woes are traceable to diggings that are left unpatched, if not unpaved. Usually, they merely cover them with irons, which are usually stolen anyway.

In many countries, they mete out severe penalties to road diggers who do not complete their job. Why we allow road diggers here to mess up their jobs is reflective of how inefficient our government is.

A government that is pro-people attends first to the smallest problems besetting the public. If a simple hole on the road isn't attended to with dispatch, then this government really is going to the dogs—if it hasn't gone to the dogs yet.

* * *

The men in blue who are allegedly traffic enforcers, whom you see regularly deployed at the Quezon Memorial Circle at the corner of Quezon Avenue, are gone. These men used to flag down motorists in wild abandon, many times for no reason at all except apparently to invent traffic violations in exchange for a fee.

These days, what you see there are men in red. Mostly, they come in threes. Their motorcycles are parked on the pavement. Like the men in blue, these men in red do the same thing: accost motorists and charge them with nonexistent traffic infractions. Again, apparently in exchange for fees.

These men ought to be sent to Basilan and ordered to produce a quota of capturing an Abu Sayyaf member every morning.

* * *

If you missed our Metro Section on Tuesday (June 26), try to grab one.

In that issue, a photo was printed showing a purported collector of grease money from jeepney drivers. It was taken by Ernie U. Sarmiento, this paper's chief photographer.

The incident happened at Dapitan, near UST.

It was a classic shot, with the collector taking the money from the jeepney driver. I can identify the collector once I see him in a police lineup.

But will he be invited for questioning? Or, will the police do something about it at all?

You tell me.

* * *

Who says the motoring industry is in the dumps?

Look, there's a new kid in town who has so much confidence on President Macapagal's leadership that he decided to put up a multi-million-peso venture named Southwest Commercial Vehicles Corp.

The guy's name is Arben Santos, whose new outfit has been appointed recently as the exclusive distributor of buses and trucks made by Hyundai Motor Corp. of South Korea.

During the signing ceremonies to seal the contract, J.H. Kang, Hyundai's general manager for Commercial Vehicles Exports, reiterated his belief that the Macapagal administration has the capacity to bring an economic miracle to the country.

"Our company is committed to expand overseas and we have identified the Philippines as one of the countries expected to register positive economic growth," said Kang. "We intend to bring in quality commercial vehicles to your country."

All buses will be completely built and assembled in Chon-Ju, South Korea.

Among the models of buses to be sold are the Aero Space LD, the Aero-City and the Aero-Country. Trucks include the 3000 GVW and the 43,200 GVW, which are designed for specialized uses like cargo and delivery trucks and fire-fighting vehicles.

Hyundai Motor, with DaimlerChrysler having a 10.41 percent stake in the company, is the domestic market leader in Korea with about 50 percent share of the vehicles market.

Southwest Commercial Vehicles Corp. is a subsidiary of the Southwest Maritime Group of Companies, which is in the logistics and distribution services for the oil industry.

"This new venture is my own humble way of saying that I see positive things in the Macapagal administration," said Santos. "I'm simply doing my own share in the rebuilding of our nation."

* * *

QUOTE ME. It is best that you lock your car while driving. These are dangerous times.

Volvo traffic accident research team continues to revolutionize passenger safety after 30 years

THE NEW Volvo S60

GÖTEBORG, Sweden—For 30 years, teams of dedicated researchers have looked into history to help create the future of safety at Volvo Car Corp.

That's how long Volvo has been gathering and analyzing data from real car crashes in Sweden. Last year, on the 30th anniversary of the Volvo traffic accident research team, generations of these safety researchers can look back on their work and know their contribution to innovations like the SIPS (side impact protection system), the revolutionary WHIPS (whiplash protection system) and numerous child safety products have helped set new standards for safety at Volvo.

The Volvo Cars traffic accident research team was launched in 1970 as a direct response to the company's road-traffic survey, conducted in Sweden in 1966 and 1967. From its initial research, the company understood the value of compiling information from actual accidents and made the research team a permanent part of the company's product development process. Over 28,000 accidents, involving more than 40,000, have been investigated.

The research team concentrates on two main areas for gathering accident data: in-depth investigations of incidents at the actual sites and statistical monitoring using data obtained from Volvo's own insurance company, Volvia. The incident research includes interviews with car occupants and studies of medical records that provide descriptions of personal injuries.

The team is on constant standby and is alerted by the emergency services when serious incidents involving Volvo cars occur within a given distance from their headquarters in Goteborg in Western Sweden. At an accident site, the researchers gather all the relevant data for later analysis, noting the precise details of the incident and its consequences. The team's doctor contacts the hospital treating any injured passengers in order to obtain information about their injuries.

By studying the data, it has been possible to identify which personal injuries arise from different types of collisions and to examine incidents according to occupant category, both adults and children.

The information gained from the Volvo team is provided to engineers at Volvo Cars, who use it to improve the existing safety systems and develop new ones to tackle the most common causes of personal injury.

"Since we've been using data firsthand from actual accidents, it has always been easy for us to work closely with our engineers," says Volvo's Christer Gustafsson, who has been researching car accidents since 1980.

'Responsible' zigzagging

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

"ZIGZAGGING Motorcycles on the Tollway" (PDI, 6/14/01) elicited e-mails from 11 readers, most of them defending the motorcyle as "the safest vehicle on the road" or supporting the lobby to allow motorcycles on the North and South Luzon Tollways. Several readers reacted with outrage. One accused "On the Road" of not revealing its source "cuz (sic) you don't have one" and making up the story out of jealousy of bikers. Another reader lectured this columnist about abusing "a position to influence others...through malice or ignorance"; and of "printing any letter that was sent to you ...if it concerns (or hurts) somebody else." A third reader, who claimed to have ridden motorcycles in 18 countries over a period of 30 years, wrote: "What a load of hodgepodge!...I can assure you responsible zigzagging is preferable to a lot of verbal hodgepodge!"

Compared to this nastiness, the e-mail from Mad Dog Motorcycle Club (MDMC) vice president Carl Huckstep was civilized. Mr. Huckstep claimed that the MDMC was "not on the expressway on Friday, May 19th. We were on the expressway on **Saturday** May 20th when we joined the Law Enforcement Riders' Association Philippines (LERAP)'s 5th Anniversary ride to Subic." (boldface supplied by Mr. Huckstep)

To this, the motorist who saw motorcycles zigzagging on the North Luzon Tollway replies: "Are we all using the same Gregorian calendar? May 19, 2001 was not a Friday and May 20th was definitely not a Saturday. My e-mail simply stated that these motorcycles were on the North Expressway last May 19, 2001."

Mr. Huckstep also claimed that it was not a Mad Dog run as they numbered only 11 out of a total of 100 bikes, although the Mad Dogs were placed at the front of the pack behind two motorcycle police escorts who, with sirens blaring and lights flashing, cleared a path through the traffic. More importantly, Mr. Huckstep said "MDMC did not break formation, we never do as we know each other's riding strengths and weaknesses and appreciate the safety offered by the increased visibility offered by riding in a group. Furthermore, Harley-Davidsons weigh almost 800 lbs so zigzagging or weaving through stationary traffic is just not feasible."

The eyewitness responds: "What I have seen is all that I wrote. The 'Maddog' logo was very visible on the jackets of the riders. Besides, 11 out of 100 bikes is irrelevant as one false move by a single bike can cause an accident....Besides, I never mentioned that traffic was stationary. What I said was that traffic was building up. That's where the zigzagging started." He reiterates that he wrote what he actually saw and that "I have no vested interest in this. My main concern is ONLY PUBLIC SAFETY."

On the other hand, another reader, Francis M. Rivera, president of BMW Owners Society (BOSS), defends zigzagging as safe. He says that "when traffic is at snail pace, like any motorist, you would try to get a step further ahead than the vehicles or motorists before you. With the slow pace, bikes weaving through lanes to get ahead do not endanger anyone. The size, weight and maneuverability of the bikes might seem overwhelming. But it is during this time that we are most safe to try to get ahead of traffic."

In other words, riders of big bikes do zigzag through slow-moving traffic, which is exactly what the motorist who observed zigzagging motorcyclists on the North Luzon Tollway last May 19 said.

Reader Richard Santingo is another defender of "responsible" zigzagging: "The 1981 Hurt Study on motorcycle accident causation factors, recognized by the US National Highway Traffic Safety Administration for many years as the premier scientific study on motorcycle safety, has documented evidence that motorcycles traveling between lanes of stopped or slow-moving cars (i.e., lane-splitting or zigzagging as you like to call it) on multiple-lane roads slightly reduces crash frequency compared with staying within the lane and moving with other traffic."

That study is 20 years old, Mr. Santiago. Motoring technology and road transport conditions are not the same as 20 years ago. Any other comments, anyone?

* * *

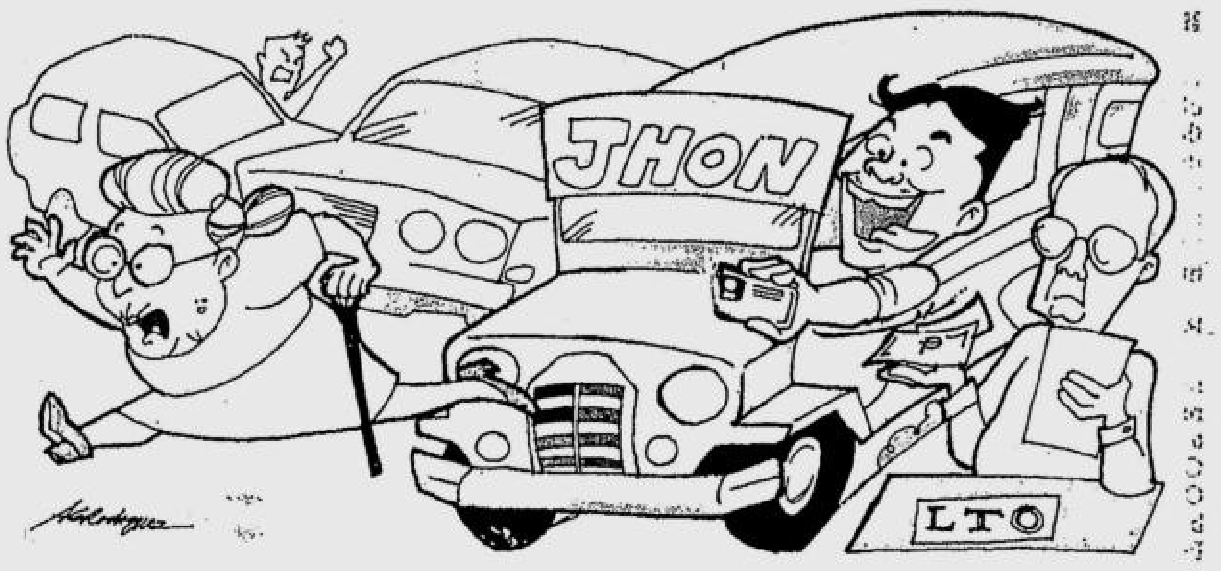
TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: Those who vote decide nothing. Those who count the votes decide everything.—**Joseph Stalin**

* * *

E-mail comments to aida_sevilla@pacific.net.ph.

Have license, will drive

BY RAYMOND TRIBDINO



ROAD accidents still make headlines. The higher the body counts the bolder the headline. If these newspaper reports were used to determine culpability in road accidents, the following numbers appear. Only 1 out of 5 road accidents is caused by faulty equipment. Poor weather conditions and other force majeur circumstances cause the second one. The remaining 3 are caused by human error.

Combine human error or more precisely, the inability to drive proactively (that is react correctly, creatively and precisely to a given situation) with poor traffic management, unenforced speed limits, faster cars, reckless drivers on poorly engineered roads and you've got the basic formula for endless road kill and mass destruction.

Proliferation

Hugely responsible for the proliferation of ill-trained drivers is the Philippines' driver's licensing system. The Land Transportation Office has often been renounced for corruption. Though many who have led the LTO have tried to reverse the trend, the licensing bureau remains to be the No. 1 reason most of our drivers are what they are today. So easy it is to get a driver's license that knowing how to drive is actually not a requirement.

But in theory, the Philippines' driving test is not an easy one to hurdle. Though it has been largely unchanged since the '70s, it is still an excellent theory test, which if practiced should produce flawless drivers. It actually requires more the understanding of driving concepts rather than road sign memory work most examinees are encouraged to do.

It is this level of difficulty that has spawned rampant corruption. On one hand, those who need the license most—those who drive to earn their keep—have little or no understanding of even the most basic driving concepts. Those who want a license, with the means to get it without any effort, fail to comprehend the driving essentials and road courtesy, to keeping life on the road sane and safe.

Antiquated test

No matter how good, our driving test is antiquated. We now have 80 percent more roads in terms of distance than we had in the '70s. Nearly 70 percent of the total accessible road network is paved, which encourages driving fast. Vehicle acceleration times have gone down from 20 seconds to 100 kph to just under 14, even with the tamest 1300 car. Most speedometers now read up to 220 kph even for a 1600 car. It was a maximum 180 kph 20 years ago. There was no definition for road rage then and drivers actually practiced merge-alternate even if they didn't know what they were doing.

Though revisions were made in the late '70s to incorporate several levels of driver's proficiency, it is not extensive enough. It lacks the practical training to teach drivers to "read the road."

Practical tests should count as much, or even more than understanding theory. It should include training in hazard perception, accident, night driving and expressway conditions. "Forced" courtesy, a misnomer, should be taught, as well as other road-reading skills, even before they are allowed behind the wheel of a car. This is particularly useful for bus and jeepney drivers who seem to think that the curb is found in the middle of the road.

Problem is, the practical test only requires pedal work, a few left and right turns and a full stop at the corner *carinderia* where the "trainer" alights to puff a cigarette.

Total revamp

It is essential to accelerate the driver's licensing test to the 21st century. This means a total revamp of the whole licensing system, completely restructuring the driver's license acquisition system and even up to revoking all licenses.

In the past the solution was to pass the driver training to driving schools. But that did not help much, because most driving schools are not out to properly train, but rather to properly earn. In most cases only skills are transmitted. Values of road courtesy are not emphasized. There are only very few driving schools who take teaching driving seriously.

We have yet to witness terrifying traffic pile-ups the kind found in British motorways and the German autobahn. But need we wait for it? One life lost is enough to justify an improved licensing system.

Smaller cars eyed for Southeast Asia

TOKYO—Toyota Motor Corp. and Honda Motor Co. will replace vehicles designed for the Southeast Asian market with smaller and cheaper models in 2003 to boost demand, a newspaper reported on Wednesday.

Toyota and Honda, Japan's biggest and third-largest carmakers, will introduce 1-liter class models after their 1.5-liter engine models failed to attract strong demand, the Nihon Keizai Shimbun said.

The Toyota Soluna and Honda City were released in 1996 and 1997 but suffered mainly due to the Asian currency crisis that hit the region after their debut, it said.

No immediate comment was available from either company.

Toyota will replace the Soluna with the Platz, while Honda will release a version of the Fit subcompact, which will debut in Japan on Thursday, the paper said.

The new models will be 10 to 20 percent cheaper due to lower development, design and procurement costs, it said.

They will produce the cars in Thailand and Malaysia and may consider exporting them in the future, it said. *Reuters*

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PROVINCIAL DEALERS WELCOME!!!

Fighting the hazards of road rage

ONE of the growing problems in the country that has been a major cause of vehicular accidents is road rage. This happens when a driver is angered by a provocation from another motorist. This kind of mishap takes place when a motorist does something that sets off another into reacting violently. This may end up in a loud dispute, an injury that goes all the way to the hospital or a mischief with someone being shot dead.

Avoiding road rage is a conscious effort. With helpful driving techniques, you can prevent being the target of someone else's frenzy or better yet forestall any chance of experiencing road rage yourself. Here are pointers from your responsible partner Isuzu Philippines Corp. on how to hit the road safe and cool.

- **Plan your trip.** Plot your route and give yourself plenty of time to get where you're going. By allowing sufficient time to get to your destination, small delays won't seem like major incidents.
- **Drive defensively.** Observe road discipline and obey traffic rules. Remember that driving is transportation, not competition. Getting safely to your destination should top your list.
- **Signal your intentions.** Make sure you use your signal light switch if you want to turn or change lanes. This way, you give those around you a clue as to where you are going or what you are about to do.
- **Do not tailgate other drivers.** Allow one car length for every 10 miles per hour (mph) of speed. Driving dangerously close behind is a surefire jeopardy. Most rear end accidents are caused in part by people driving too close to the car ahead of them.
- **Stay out of the way.** Give aggressive drivers plenty of room to get ahead of you.
- **Put your pride in the back seat.** Do not challenge tailgaters or overtakers by speeding up or slowing down.
- **Don't let bad mood do the driving.** Reason with yourself. Anger is unhealthy. Remember, anger released is anger increased. Anger transformed is anger dissolved.
- **Watch your headlights.** Be wary in using the headlamps. Either oncoming or from behind, make sure that you are not blinding someone with your bright lights.
- **Use your horn sparingly.**
- **Avoid eye contact.** Avoid eye contact with aggressive drivers. Shun from using obscene gestures that can get you into some trouble. On one hand, when confronted with foul gestures, ignore and refuse to return them.

Anyone who spends time on the road has and will continue to experience sorts of road rage. As precaution and evasion go a long way in promoting safety and passenger well-being, you know that it's all a matter of having the right attitude. Keep your cool. Start making smart choices and lavish in safer, hassle-free rides.

Tips for steering power into your car

A DRIVER'S confidence on his vehicle is determined by his control on all its functions and capabilities, one of which is tested whenever turning the steering wheel.

In most difficult driving conditions, such as off-road, in tight spaces and corners and curves, you need the utmost power to steer your car into the desired direction or maneuver.

The system works when you turn the steering wheel. The shaft transmits the motion to the steering gear, which multiplies your turning effort, to let you steer easily. Power steering uses hydraulic power to boost the turning force that the driver applies manually to the steering wheel. This is how the system works basically. For maintaining this efficient action of your steering system, here are a few tips to maximize the power in your car:

- Train yourself to be constantly aware of your car's steering characteristics. If you experience any "hardness" in steering, if there's more than one inch play in the steering wheel, or if any unusual sounds occur when steering, have your mechanic inspect the system immediately.
- Correct wheel alignment and wheel balance. These are essential to safe and comfortable steering. If the wheels are not properly aligned and balanced, they can also reduce the life of your tires by half or more. You may need a wheel alignment if your wheels pull to the right or left on a straight road. Meanwhile, a vibrating steering wheel may require checking your wheels for balance. Fitting new tires should also include having them balanced right then and there.
- If your power steering feels stiff while driving, stop immediately and ask for help from a nearby auto shop or your personal mechanic. If you can't stop, drive cautiously to the nearest service station to check the level of the power steering fluid and also whether the power steering drive belt is loose or broken.

To retain control over your power steering and regain confidence in your vehicle, use a quality power steering fluid brand such as Scientifically Treated Petroleum (STP).

STP Power Steering Fluid helps protect today's power steering systems against pump breakdown caused by abnormal wear, oxidation and foaming. It is formulated to operate over a wide range of temperature and operating conditions, for smooth, dependable year-round performance.

Its main ingredients are a proprietary additive system in mineral base stocks that functions as antiwear agents for metal protection, viscosity index improver for proper flow characteristic, swell agents for seal protection, antifoam agents for controlling foam tendencies and antioxidants for controlling fluid deterioration.

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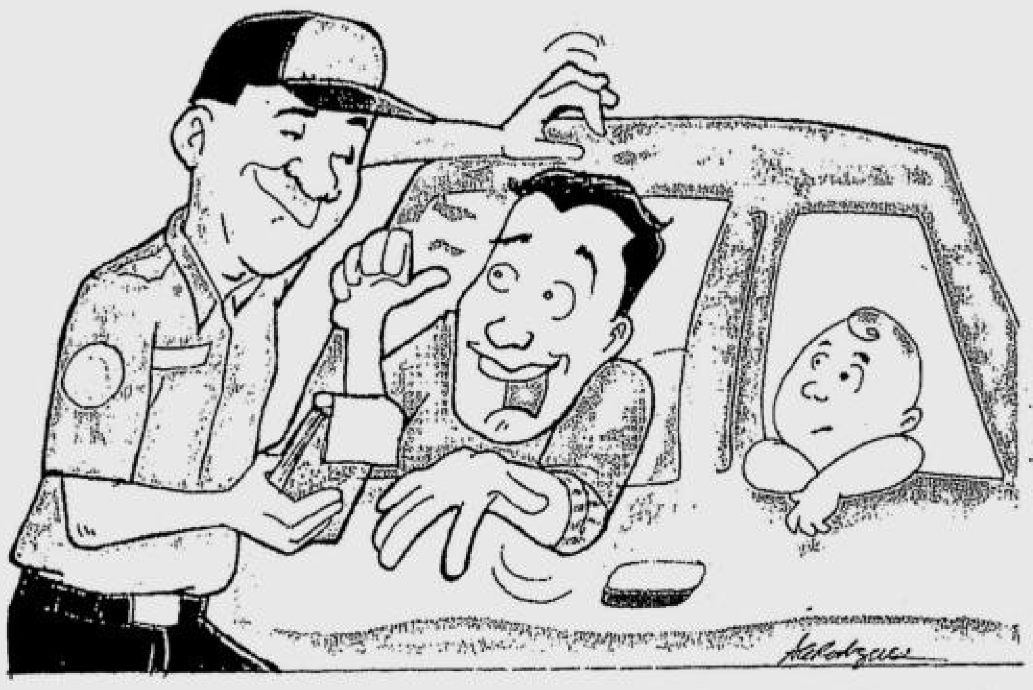
MOTORING

CESAR D. MANGAWANG, Editor

Buy a car, get pulled over after a week



BY TESSA R. SALAZAR

YOUR happiness is immeasurable as you look at the flashy vehicle you just bought. Your dealer promises it'll handle all the processing of your registration papers and your license plates in no time at all.

Little do you take note of that red conduction sticker on the upper right hand corner of your windshield as you drive away. Most likely, your dealer forgot to tell you that the conduction sticker works for only seven days after delivery of the vehicle.

The days come and go, and the promised documents and plates remain a promise. One week passes. Two weeks… You begin to wonder, what are those !@*#%! people at the Land Transportation Office doing with my papers?

Then, one day, an MMDA (Metropolitan Manila Development Authority) officer flags you down. You wonder what your violation was. To make matters worse, the officer hands you a ticket and invites you to a hearing and orders you to pay a fine. Is your new car cursed, or what?

Jose Espina's Revo GSX was delivered to him May 22 from an Alabang dealership. He was flagged down June 7 at the corner of Buendia Avenue and Roxas Boulevard. He was issued a traffic violation ticket and fined P900 for an overextended conduction sticker. Puzzled, he explained he hadn't violated anything and that it was his dealer who was handling the registration papers. He filed a protest at the MMDA adjudication board. When he asked the dealer, the dealer blamed the LTO.

A sales agent who refused to be named said the speed of the paperwork depended on the submission of the requirements. If these would be submitted completely by the car manufacturing plant on time, the registration papers of the buyer would be processed within the seven-day period. But there are cases, she said, that the manufacturing plant itself caused the delay of the submission.

Sunny Motors' Boy Concepcion, a sales agent, said that his client who had a new vehicle bearing only a three-day-old conduction sticker was flagged down by law enforcers. The law enforcers allegedly counted Saturday and Sunday as part of the seven-day period when only working days should have been counted.

Concepcion disclosed he already had four clients during the past weeks flagged down by traffic enforcers.

LTO registration chief Ditas Guttierez, meanwhile, said there should be no problems with new vehicle registrations since vehicle dealers do the registration themselves. She surmised that what may take them too long are those new vehicle owners who choose special plates, fancy plates, or vanity plates.

"For people who would like to have their registration fast, (they) should do it on their own. They should not rely on dealers. The dealers wait for other clients and submit them to my office in bulk to cut time and costs. *Isang lakaran na lang papuntang* LTO, *isang lakaran papuntang* highway patrol and *isang lakaran papuntang* district office (Just one trip to the LTO, the highway patrol and the district office.)."

Can you really get your documents within seven days by yourself? Guttierez said that it is possible in the LTO. She added that if one has all the documents, the owner can get the registration papers within the day. On the other hand, the turnaround time for bulk submission at the LTO is three days.

MMDA traffic director Ernesto Camarillo said that the lapsed conduction sticker has long been an existing regulation.

"From our experience, many motorists tend to abuse the conduction sticker even if they acquired their license plates already. It is unfair for those who follow the law."

An automotive consumer advocate suggested that buyers ask for a certification or a letter from the dealer stating that the registration papers are already being processed, and that any extension isn't the buyer's fault.

Mitsubishi launches first car under turnaround plan

TOKYO—Japan's troubled Mitsubishi Motors Corp. produced the first fruit of a drastic "turnaround" plan Wednesday—a new-generation recreational car.

The Airtrek—a name chosen "to express the idea of footloose, adventure-filled motoring pleasure" according to the company—is also the first motor to pass a strict quality control check imposed by US-German 37.3 percent shareholder DaimlerChrysler AG.

"I believe it will prove a stronghold in our emergency turnaround plan," exclaimed MMC's CEO Takashi Sonobe.

"We began a new campaign with the determination to start a new MMC without the ghosts of the past," he said.

Banishing these "ghosts" will be a tough task for the Japanese auto firm following a spate of embarrassing recalls and legal disputes over the past 12 months.

Last year Mitsubishi was mired in scandal after confessing in August it had failed to inform authorities about at least 64,000 customer complaints over faulty vehicles since 1977, opting to repair the vehicles itself instead of issuing costly model-wide recalls.

Subsequent fall-out included a company-wide criminal investigation and damage suits from shareholders, as well as a slump in domestic sales.

But Wednesday's launch is a bid by Japan's fourth largest automaker to step up a gear and steer through former problems into a brighter future, said Mitsubishi executives.

The Airtrek "is the very first MMC model based on DaimlerChrysler's quality management system. I'm convinced it will be a success story," said chief operational officer Rolf Eckrodt, a former DaimlerChrysler executive who arrived in Japan in January to help implement reform plans at Mitsubishi.

"We will launch it now in Japan, then in the US," Eckrodt said adding the company would target the United States next summer or autumn, followed by Europe.

Mitsubishi announced the turnaround plan in February when it said it would cut 9,500 jobs or 14 percent of its total workforce.

In May the firm reported its biggest-ever group net loss, of 278.1 billion yen ($2.3 billion) in the year to March, due to pension fund payments and recall costs.

The figure tumbled sharply from a net loss of 23.3 billion yen a year earlier, but Mitsubishi pledged to break even in the current financial year to March 2002. *AFP*

752 car theft cases reported in 5 months

A TOTAL of 752 car theft cases were reported to the authorities from January to May this year, said Rep. Ernesto Herrera (Lakes, Bohol), founding chair of the anticrime monitoring group Citizens' Drug Watch Foundation.

The National Police Traffic Management Group figures translate into a monthly average of 150 car theft cases—down by 4 percent or six incidents compared to the monthly average of 156 reported in the entire 12 months of last year, according to Herrera.

A total of 1,877 car theft cases were reported in 2000 as against the 1,909 documented in 1999.

Herrera stressed the need for the authorities to sustain the drive against syndicated car thieves, particularly those being protected by corrupt law enforcers and former officials of the Land Transportation Office.

He also said the next Congress should pass a new legislation that would curb car theft.

The last Congress failed to pass a bill that would have added more teeth to the Anti-Car Theft Law. The House of Representatives approved the bill earlier this year, but the Senate failed to pass it.

The measure would have imposed more stringent controls on the interisland shipment and dismantling of motor vehicles.

It would have also required shipping operators to regularly submit to Camp Crame a report on all vehicles and parts shipped.

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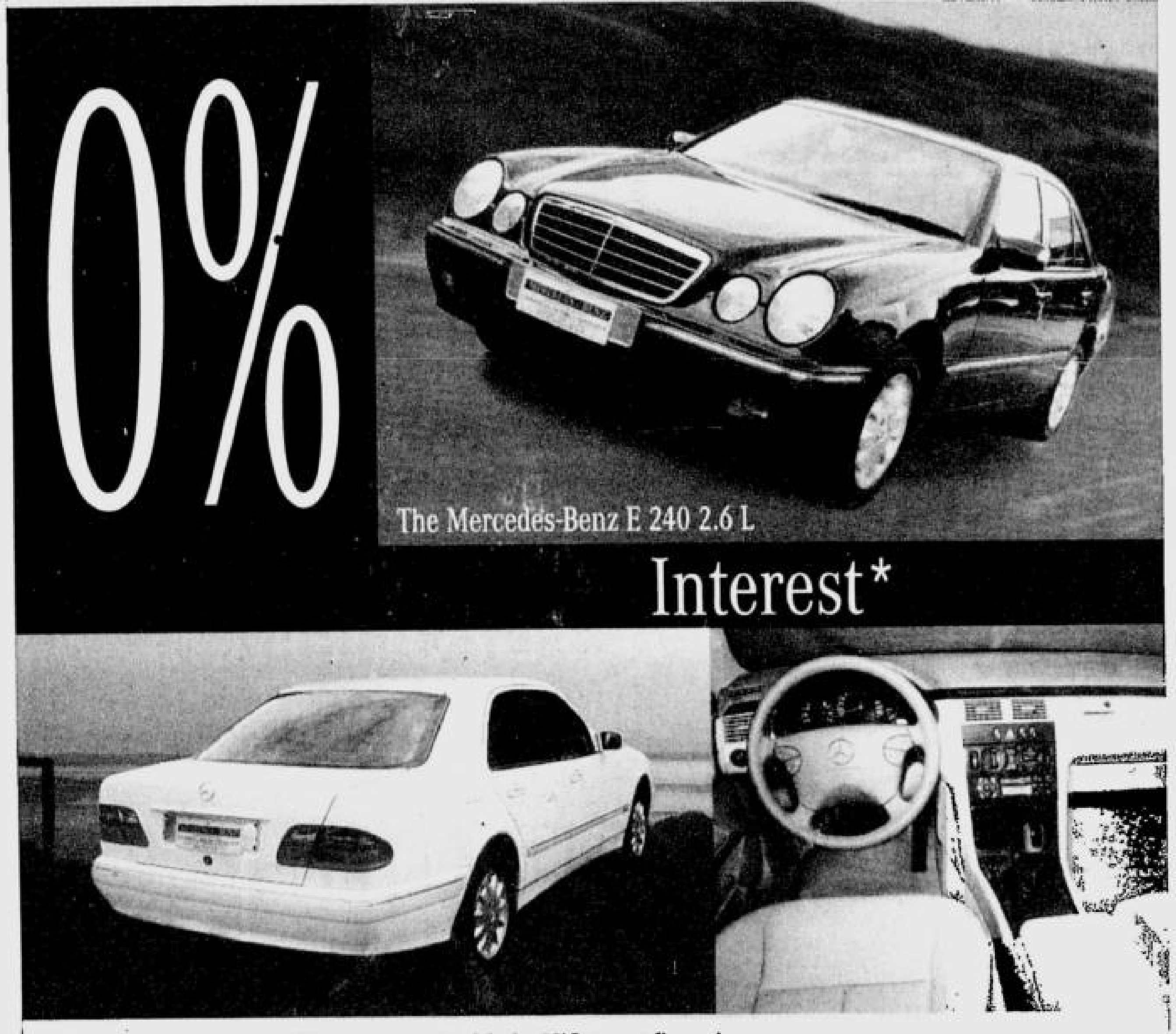
• REPAIRS WINDSHIELD SCRATCH, LEAKS & DEFOGGER
CALL NOW BEFORE ITS TOO LATE!
MANILA MIDWEST #40 Kalayaan Ave., Q.C. or 820 Edsa, Makati City
#7 Perpetual Ave., Perpetual 8, Bacoor (infront of SM along Kawit Rd.)
Q.C. 435-6391/926-6829 Mktl. 472-0525/851-0062
Bacoor 417-5332 Or See Any Yellow Pages under Glass
CEBU - 233.5276 ' DAVAO 221.5329 ' ILO-ILO 337.3782 ' CDO 724.768
ISABELA 624.2583 ' BAGUIO 447.2724 ' BACOLOD 435.1889
DO HOME SERVICE Bring this ad for P150 OFF Exp. 6/30/01
Website http members aol com/htocom

A powerful car at a powerful financing plan



▶ Power and luxury are within your reach with the 0% Interest financing plan, with 50% downpayment and 12 months installment at absolutely no interest, exclusively for the Mercedes-Benz E 240 2.6 L. Limited offer only from June 7 to August 6, 2001 at Commercial Motors Corp., all branches and authorized dealers. Subject to Bank Approval.

SRP	% D/P	Amount of D/P	Net Monthly at 0% Interest (12 Months)
P 3,200,000.00	50%	P 1,600,000.00	P 133,334.00

BPI Family Bank • China Bank • Metro Bank

Mercedes-Benz
The future of the automobile

Full factory warranty from Commercial Motors Corporation
Per DTI NCR Permit # 1706 Series of 2001

Commercial Motors Corp. Mercedes Ave., San Miguel, Pasig City Tel 641-9866; 641-9867; 641-2286; 641-2290 Fax 641-7367; 641-2287 • BRANCHES • Baloy, Cagayan de Oro City Tel (08822) 732509 • MC Briones Highway, Bo. Maguikay, Mandaue City Tel (032) 345-1250 Fax(032) 346-2772 • Km 11, Sasa, Davao City Tel (082) 235-2495 Fax (082) 235-2494 • McArthur Highway, Calasiao, Pangasinan Tel (075) 517-2513; (075) 517-53-17 Telefax (075) 522-0783 • DEALERS • CATS Motors EDSA, Greenhills Tel 723-5808 to 12 Fax 726-7741 • CATS Motors-Alabang, Alabang-Zapote Rd., Las Piñas Tel 8723768; Fax No.: 8725186 • EUROPHIL Motors Corp. 5566 South Superhighway cor. Finlandia St., Makati City Tel 844-3438; 844-6794 • COMMERCIAL Auto Sales Service Corp. 2256 Pasong Tamo cor. EDSA, Makati City Tel 840-4396; 840-4397 Fax 812-3622 • TRANSCOR Motors, Inc. Araneta St., Singcang, Bacolod City Tel (034) 433-0331; (034) 435-0221 to 23 Fax (034) 433-0330 • TRANSCOR Motors, Inc. Sen. Benigno Aquino Ave. (Diversion Rd.), Iloilo City Tel (033) 320-0952; (033) 320-0567 Fax (033) 320 0536 • AUTOLAND Sales 1616 Quezon Ave., Quezon City Tel 922-6925; 928-2532 Telefax 922-3108 • AUTOLAND Sales (Dau) Pampanga Tel (045) 332-3342; (045) 332-3343 Telefax (045) 3323341

HOW DO YOU GIVE EVEN BRAND-NEW ,CARS--
THE BRIGHTEST , LONGEST-LASTING SHINE EVER?
PLUS STRONGER PAINT PROTECTION!
(GOOD ON ALL CARS! EVEN IF "NOT-SO-BRAND-NEW" ANYMORE.)
Ziebart DIAMOND GLOSS

FOR FEEDBACK, TEXT US AT (0919) 661-2337 OR E-MAIL US AT LIFESTYLE@INQUIRER.COM.PH
LIFESTYLE
CHELO BANAL-FORMOSO, Editor

₱20 Baon Buddies
BAON2:
1 Dunkin' Donut and regular Coffee

Tastes

PIXIE Sevilla's Strawberry Shortcake

Forget these not

Triple chocolate cake with hazelnut, dreamy cheesecake, bulging eclairs, panacotta, biscocharitas . . .

(Story on page C4)

His Holiness Maharishi Mahesh Yogi who introduced Transcendental Meditation to the world 42 years ago, is now introducing total knowledge of Natural Law to every profession for perfection to be enjoyed in individual and national life—Heaven on Earth.

Transcendental Meditation®

A Scientifically Validated Program to Increase Creativity, Health, and Happiness

Transcendental Meditation (TM®) is a simple, natural, easily learned mental technique that allows the mind to enjoy a state of inner wakefulness, while the body gains a unique state of deep rest. This natural state of 'restful alertness' has been shown by scientific research to:
•reduce stress, tension and anxiety,
•reduce insomnia, normalize blood pressure,
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FREE Introductory Lecture: *By Appointment*
Call (02) 722-8927 from 10am - 12nn and 2 - 4pm

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Australian Roast Calf*
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*Roast On The Spot.
We cater within your budget
Call Aurelio's Catering
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Cocktails, Wedding, Children Menu available

Create a lasting Impression

DERMATOLOGICAL SERVICES:
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The Dermatological Clinic
Clinic Hours: Mon - Fri @ 10 am - 7 pm • Sat @ 10 am - 5 pm
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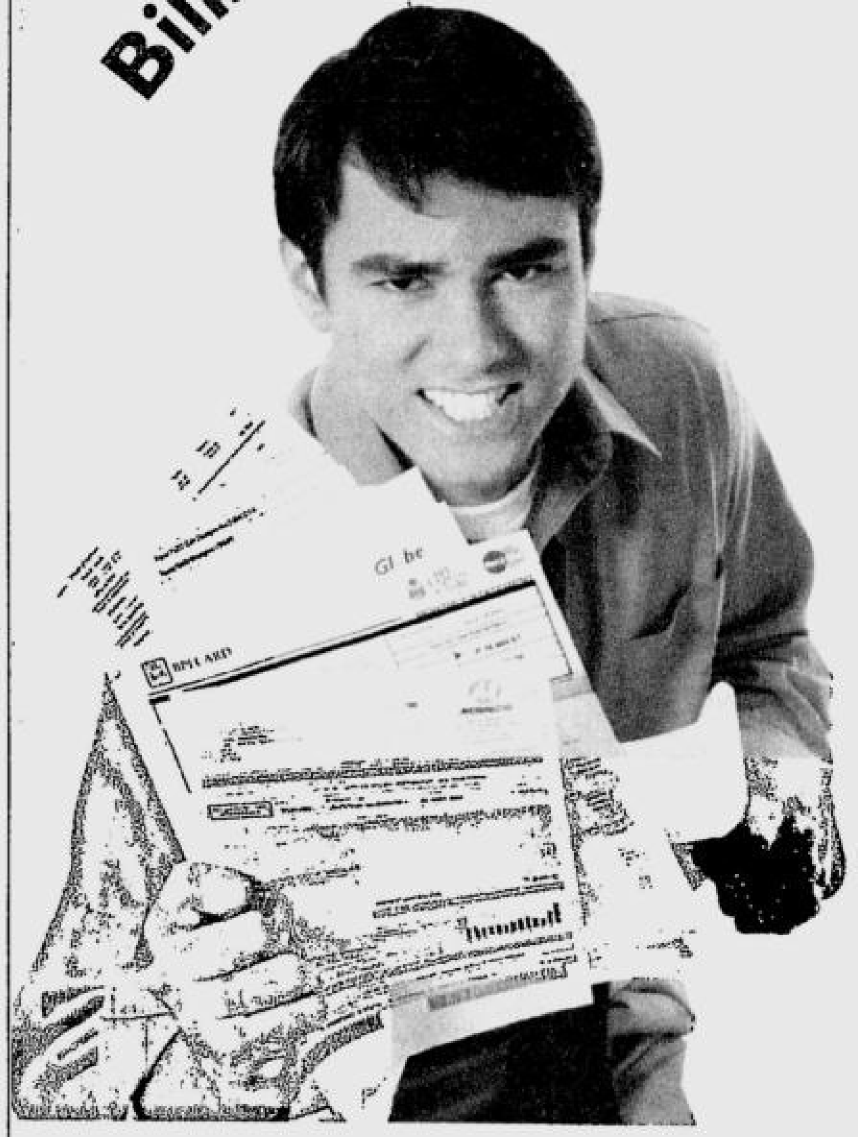
FOR INQUIRIES, CALL: 894-3164

WHAT'S ON AT ROBINSONS

Robinsons Food Court
Cool Meals
Cool Wheels
Coca-Cola
Dine and you may win @ Robinsons Food Court
Get a chance to win a brand new FORD LYNX 1.6 L GSi tax-free in this exciting promo!
Plus 100 Tamiyas,
25 mountain bikes,
5 scooters and other cool instant prizes.
See leaflets for details.
May 1 - June 30, 2001
at all participating Food Court outlets
Per DTI-NCR Permit No.0782, Series of 2001
ROBINSONS Malls
visit us at www.robinsonsland.com



Oh No, Bills Again!
Pay your bills Check-Free and get a chance to win back what you paid up to
₱100,000!
Check-Free™ PAYMENTS
Bills of Fortune
There are more than 100 bills you can pay to.*
The more bills you pay, the more cash you win back!

Oh Yes, Bills Again!
There will be 5 lucky Check-Free Payments winners in the Grand Draw on August 24, 2001.

1. The promo is open to all existing BPI, BPI Family Bank and BPI Direct ATM cardholders with at least one valid Check-Free Payments reference number (excluding BPI, BPI Family Bank and/or BPI Direct accounts as reference numbers) from June 18 to August 17, 2001. If you still don't have an Express Teller account, open one now and make sure to enroll in Check-Free Payments.
2. A computer-generated raffle number will be assigned for each Express Teller card number enrolled in Check-Free Payments which will be drawn at the end of the promo period. To qualify, you must have a minimum total payment amount of ₱500.00 within the promo period.
3. Just pay your bills from any of the more than 100 merchants through the Express Teller ATM, Express Phone or BPI Express Online.
4. To determine the cash prize, all payments made within the promo period shall be computed (excluding inter-account payments).
5. There will be five (5) winners. Each winner shall receive a minimum cash prize of ₱20,000.00 and a maximum of ₱100,000.00.
In cases where the cardholder whose computed total payments are below ₱20,000, he/she will receive ₱20,000. And if he/she paid more than ₱100,000, he/she will receive ₱100,000. Bonus cash prizes will be computed separately.
6. **Bonus Cash Prizes: An additional ₱10,000.00 will be given to the winner if he/she meets any of the following conditions during the promo period:
• Enrolled in Express Bills and/or paid at least once through BPI Express Online
• Enrolled a new or additional reference number and paid this reference number during the promo period
• Has at least five reference numbers enrolled (excluding BPI, BPI Family Bank and/or BPI Direct accounts)
7. The draw will be held at 10:00 AM at the BPI Building, Ayala Avenue corner Paseo de Roxas, Makati City on August 24, 2001. A DTI representative will be invited to witness the draw.
8. A depositor can win only once during the draw. If two or more of your accounts are drawn, the account with the higher cash prize will be declared as the winning account.
9. Winners will be notified by registered mail. A winner's ad shall be published in at least one major newspaper. Winners should agree to have their names and/or photographs published.
10. Prizes are tax-free and shall be credited to the winner's Express Teller account within seven (7) working days after the draw date.
11. All employees of the BPI Unibank, Image Dimensions, and their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified.
12. All accounts closed/terminated, dormant, under litigation, garnished on or before the draw date and all FCDU, government, corporate and non-individual accounts (including EPS merchants) are likewise disqualified.
13. In case of dispute, the decision of BPI Unibank, with concurrence of DTI, is considered final.

PAY CHECK-FREE THROUGH
Express Teller ATM · Express Phone 89-100 · Express Online www.bpiexpressonline.com

* For a complete list of merchants, please call 89-100. Dial 0 to speak to a phonebanker.

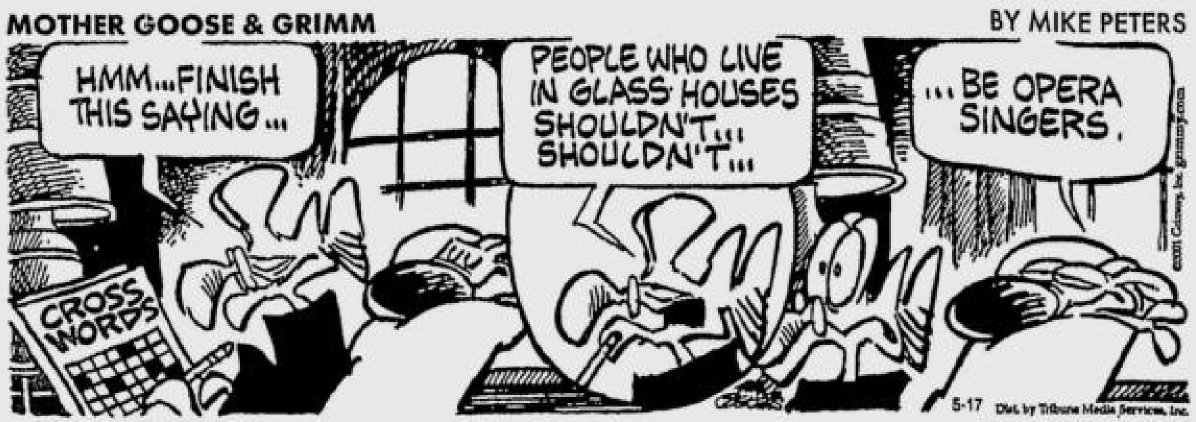
Plus a bonus cash prize of ₱10,000 for new Check-Free enrollees**
Enroll now!
CALL 89-100.

150 YEARS
BANK OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS
A tradition of leadership

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1856 Series of 2001

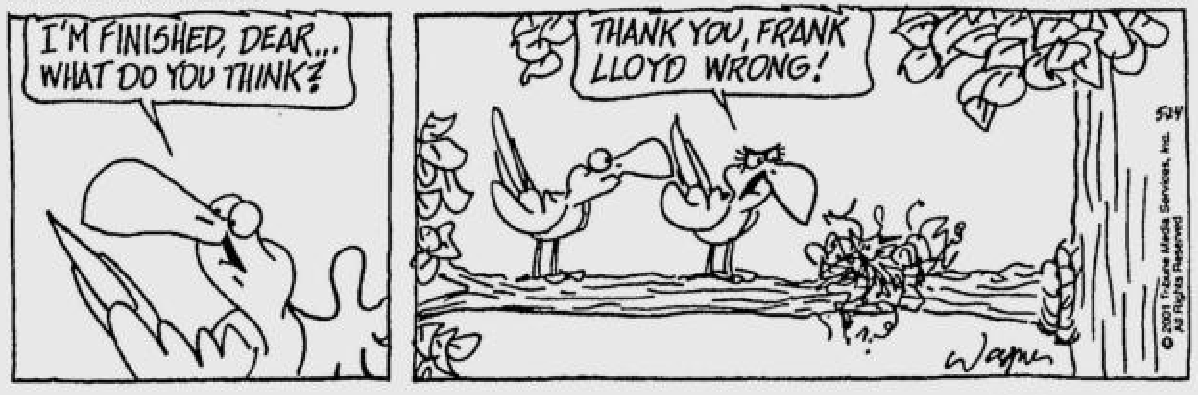
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


HMM...FINISH THIS SAYING...
CROSS WORDS
PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN GLASS HOUSES SHOULDN'T... SHOULDN'T...
...BE OPERA SINGERS.
5-17 Dist. by Tribune Media Services, Inc.

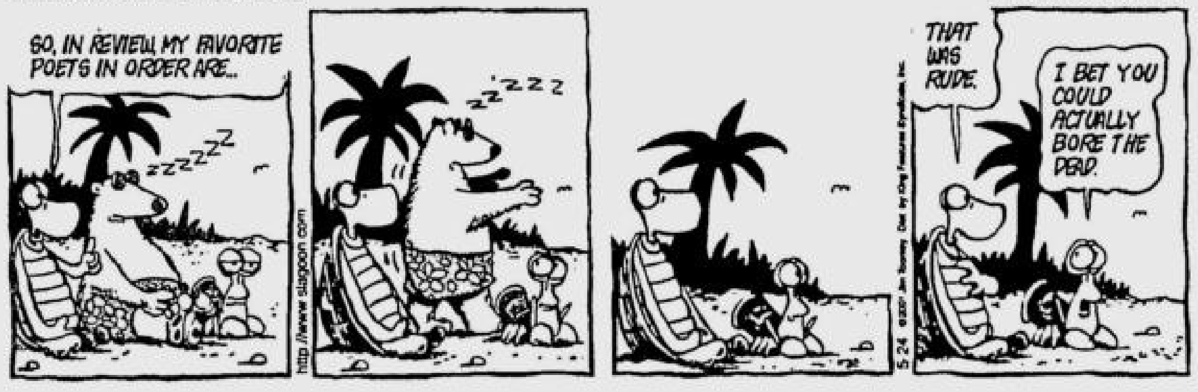
ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER


I'M FINISHED, DEAR... WHAT DO YOU THINK?
THANK YOU, FRANK LLOYD WRONG!
© 2001 Tribune Media Services, Inc. All Rights Reserved
Wagner

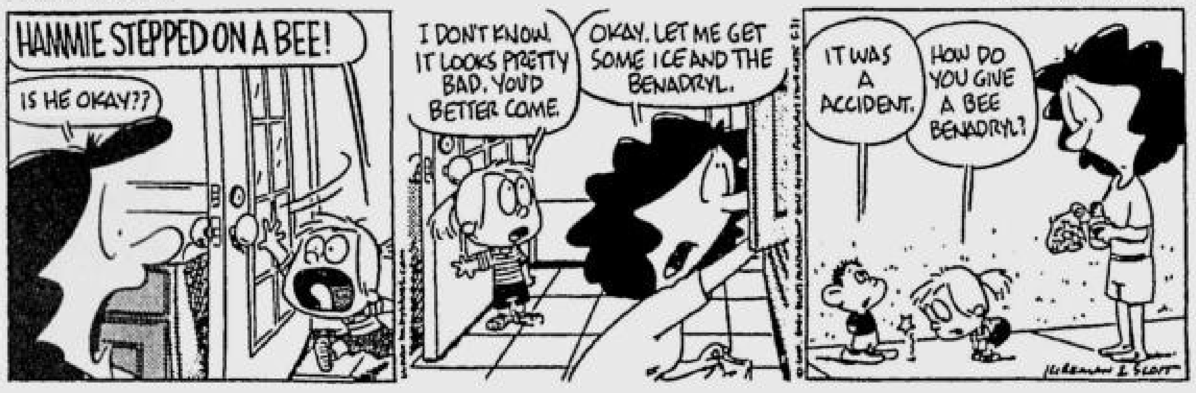
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


SO, IN REVIEW, MY FAVORITE POETS IN ORDER ARE...
ZZZZZ
ZZZZ
http://www.slagoon.com
THAT WAS RUDE.
I BET YOU COULD ACTUALLY BORE THE DEAD.
5-24

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


HAMMIE STEPPED ON A BEE!
IS HE OKAY??
I DON'T KNOW. IT LOOKS PRETTY BAD. YOU'D BETTER COME.
OKAY. LET ME GET SOME ICE AND THE BENADRYL.
IT WAS A ACCIDENT.
HOW DO YOU GIVE A BEE BENADRYL?
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Kathy Bates, Gilda Radner, Mel Brooks, John Cusack, John Elway, Mary Stuart Masterson

Happy Birthday: Discipline will be your middle name this year, and the amount you can produce will surprise others. Your accomplishments will be a direct result of your belief in your work. Put your best foot forward and turn your dreams into a reality. Your numbers: 13, 26, 31, 35, 44, 46

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Don't let someone you work with tempt you to do things that you know are wrong. Get ahead by working hard. You can push your own creative ideas. Join groups that offer a challenging position.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Do things that you enjoy. It's time to pamper yourself and make the changes that will help you feel like a million bucks. Don't hold back. It's time you put yourself first.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Don't let someone you live with drive you crazy today. Get out and do what you want. Sticking around the house will only lead to petty differences.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You'll enjoy getting together with friends. New relationships can develop if you take the time to experience new activities. Go out and enjoy.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You'll be in a go-getter mood. Take on a challenge at work and don't be afraid to put yourself on the line. You will come up with the ideas needed to make a project fly.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Don't fool yourself. You'll be emotional today. Channel your energy into love, not war. You need intense physical activity to use up that tension. It's time to let loose.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Re-evaluate your motives. Think twice about how you are handling others. You may be unrealistic with people you work with. Try to be fair in your dealings.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You will be disgruntled if you lend someone money and he or she doesn't want to pay you back. Try to put thought and effort into your personal partnership. You need to build a closer bond.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Someone you work with will try to cause problems for you. If you stick to your guns and do your best, your boss will recognize how valuable you really are. You can make financial gains by playing your cards right.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You need to get out. Look into intriguing activities that will enhance your awareness, challenge your mind and stimulate you physically.

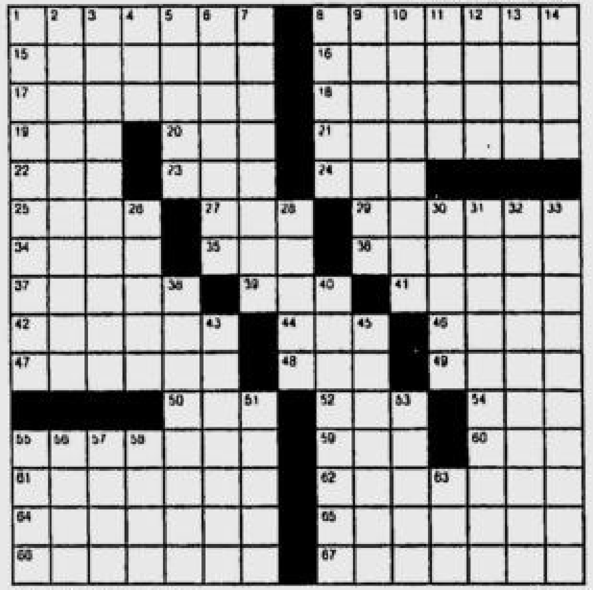
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): It's wise to watch your spending habits. You may want to help others, but give them suggestions, not cash. Don't be too quick to take a chance on a risky investment.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Your partner may take you for a ride on an emotional roller coaster if you allow it. Don't beat around the bush. Bluntly ask what the problem is and how you can fix it. Take control.

Birthday Baby: You are sophisticated, intuitive and certainly ahead of your time. You will set trends and always be where the action is. You are a thinker, a leader and a peacemaker.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com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By Annabel Michaels
Williamsburg, VA

5/12/01

ACROSS
1 Publishers
8 Amy Tan novel, "The __ Secret Senses"
15 Monk's underwear material
16 Usually
17 Recidivism
18 Name anew
19 Simian
20 Tryon novel, "__ Other"
21 Slipped by
22 South African golfer Ernie
23 Island group in the Carolines
24 Brooks of "High Anxiety"
25 Low-cal
27 Tent stake
29 Puts off going to bed
34 1904 Nobel winner Pavlov
35 Go wrong
36 Williams of tennis
37 Austin's state
39 Erie Canal mule
41 Highest U.S. tower
42 Votes in
44 __ Moines
46 High cards
47 Part of DOS
48 __ Marie Saint
49 Racetrack ribbon
50 Encountered
52 & so forth
54 Place of confinement
55 Peace-loving
59 Falsehood
60 Chasing game
61 Preschool
62 Hops-flavored beverage
64 Current units
65 Artist's studio
66 Planters
67 Ties again

DOWN
1 Hebrews
2 Hurry up!
3 Levies on merchandise
4 Thurman of "Pulp Fiction"
5 Unoccupied
6 Transform
7 Ones who succeed unexpectedly
8 Seraglio
9 Vain
10 Maines and Wood
11 Slight intermittent leak
12 Sunken grooves
13 Model Macpherson
14 Feat
26 Dramatize
28 Accepted standard
30 Give medical aid to
31 Hornblower or Ahab, e.g.
32 Still a law
33 Fares
38 Goblets
40 Zero in golf
43 Vilifier
45 Cloy
51 Ringlet of hair
53 Show-biz notable
55 Rehan and Huxtable
56 Appoint
57 Embodiment of a particular group
58 Topped like a cake
63 Wallach of "The Magnificent Seven"

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

D	A	D	O		E	T	H	O	S		C	R	A	B
A	V	I	V		P	R	O	N	E		L	U	L	U
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M	A	R	T	I	N	S	H	E	E	N		R	M	S
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I	C	E	S		D	E	E	R	E		S	T	E	W

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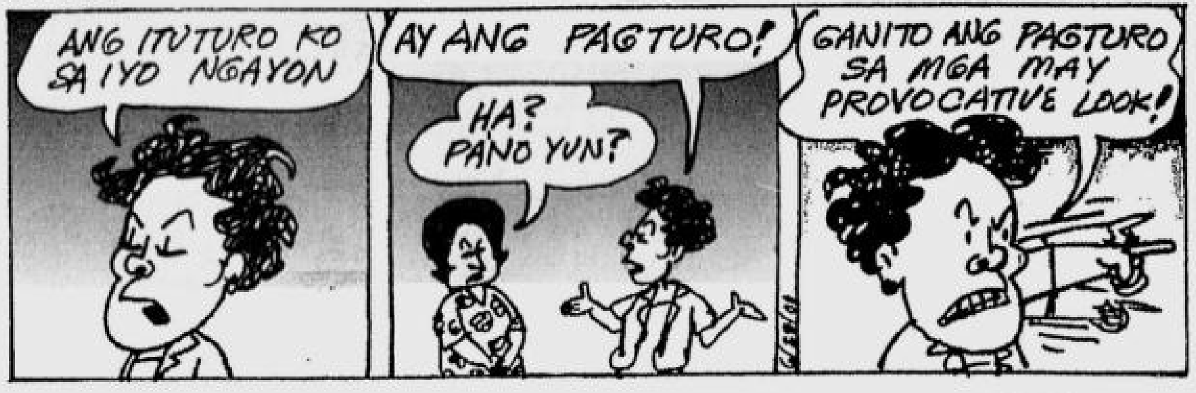
5/12/01

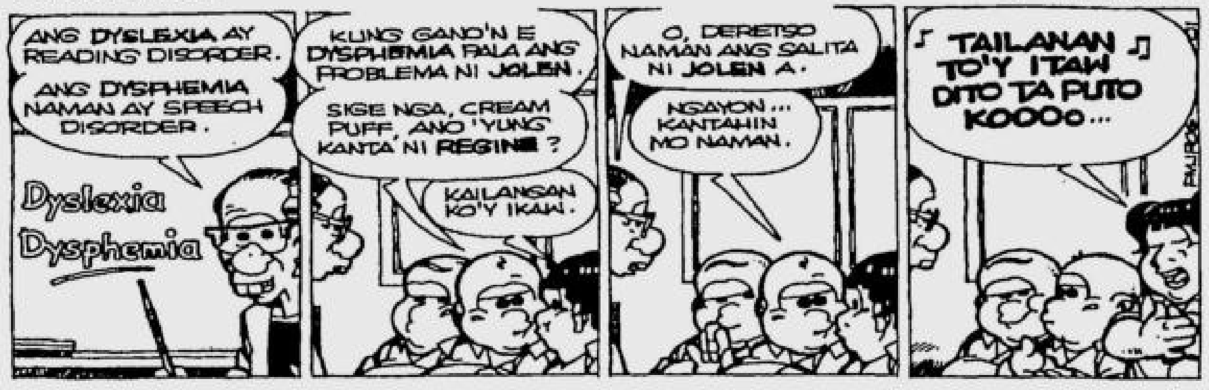
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


ANG ITUTURO KO SA IYO NGAYON
AY ANG PAGTURO!
HA? PANO YUN?
GANITO ANG PAGTURO SA MGA MAY PROVOCATIVE LOOK!

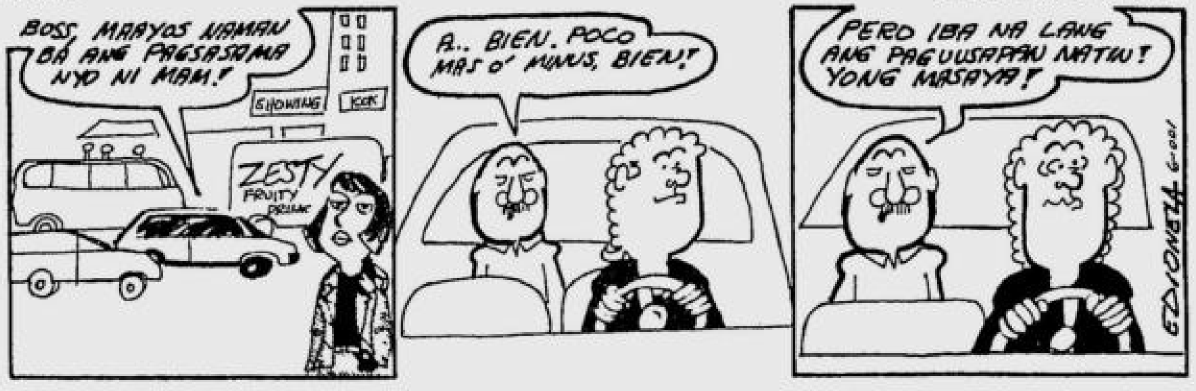
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


ANG DYSLEXIA AY READING DISORDER.
ANG DYSPHEMIA NAMAN AY SPEECH DISORDER.
Dyslexia
Dysphemia
KUNG GANO'N E DYSPHEMIA PALA ANG PROBLEMA NI JOLEN.
SIGE NGA, CREAM PUFF, ANO 'YUNG KANTA NI REGINE?
KAILANGAN KO'Y IKAW.
O, DERETSO NAMAN ANG SALITA NI JOLEN A.
NGAYON... KANTAHIN MO NAMAN.
TAILANAN TO'Y ITAW DITO TA PUTO KOOOO...
PMJR

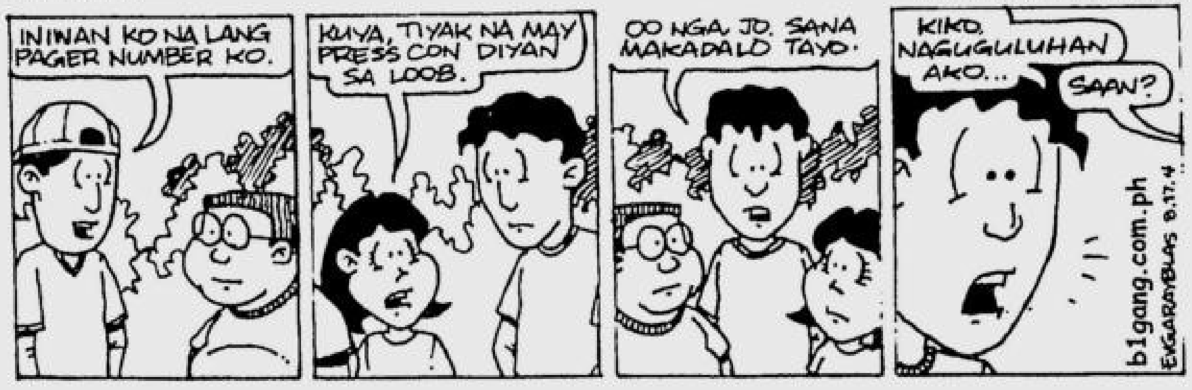
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


BOSS, MAAYOS NAMAN BA ANG PAGSASAMA NYO NI MAM?
SHOWING
ZESTY FRUITY DRINK
A.. BIEN. POCO MAS O' MINUS, BIEN!
PERO IBA NA LANG ANG PAG-UUSAPAN NATIN! YONG MASAYA!
EDIONELA 6-2001

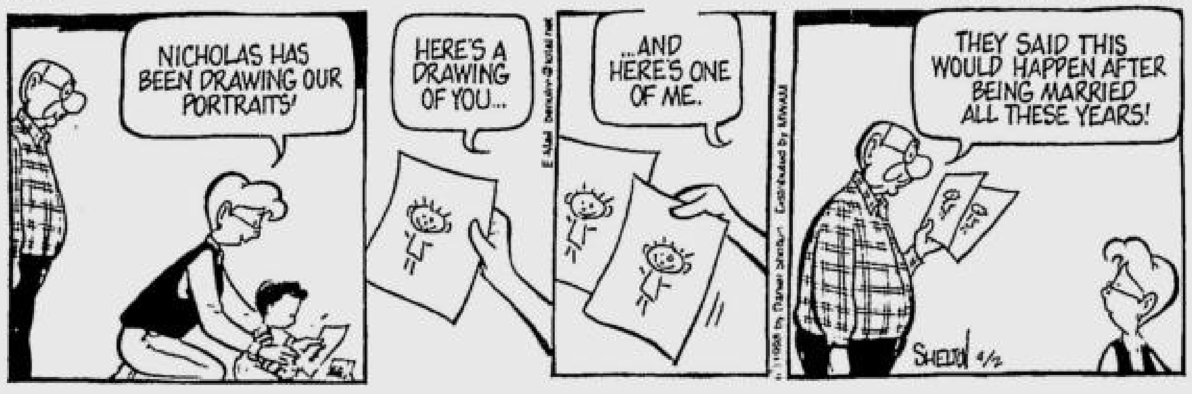
B1 GANG

BY ATS11/ JEA/ FEVG


ININAN KO NA LANG PAGER NUMBER KO.
KUYA, TIYAK NA MAY PRESS CON DIYAN SA LOOB.
OO NGA JO. SANA MAKADALO TAYO.
KIKO, NAGUGULUHAN AKO...
SAAN?
b1gang.com.ph

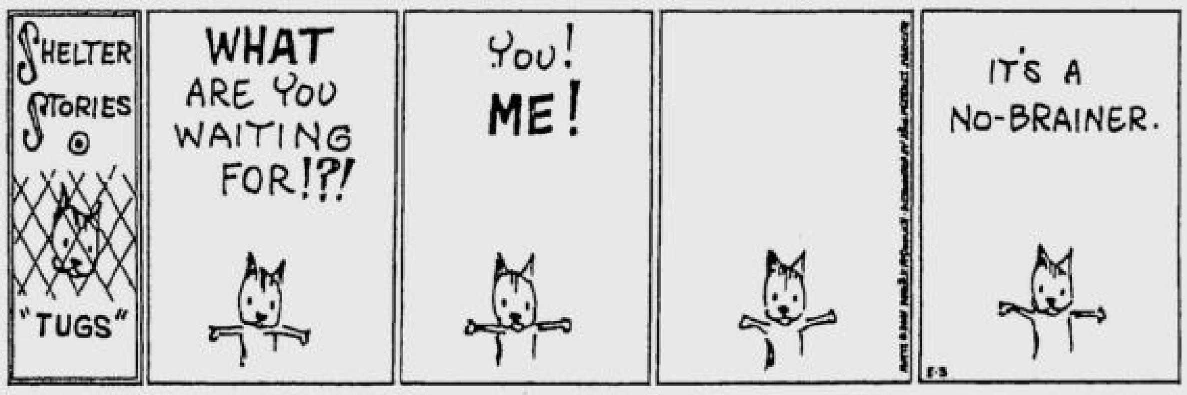
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


NICHOLAS HAS BEEN DRAWING OUR PORTRAITS!
HERE'S A DRAWING OF YOU...
...AND HERE'S ONE OF ME.
THEY SAID THIS WOULD HAPPEN AFTER BEING MARRIED ALL THESE YEARS!
SHELTON

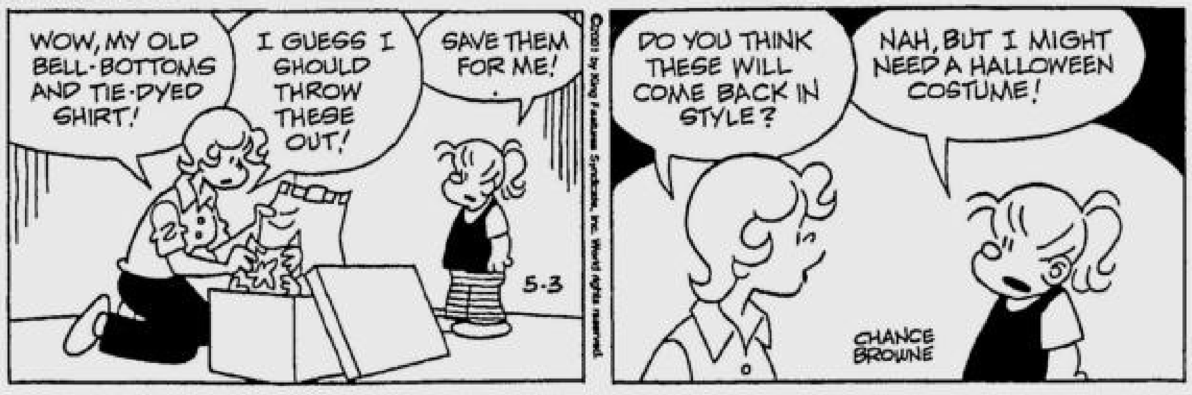
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


SHELTER STORIES
"TUGS"
WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR!?!
YOU! ME!
IT'S A NO-BRAINER.
5-3

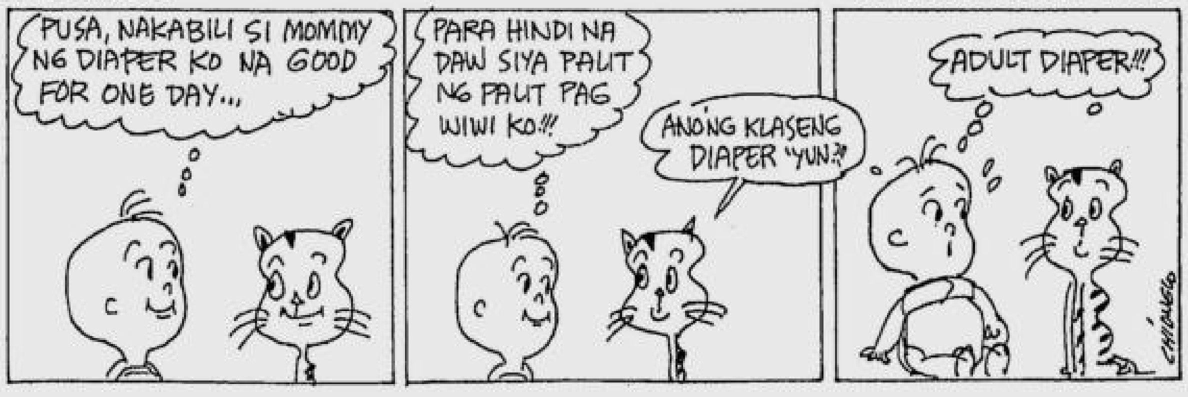
HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


WOW, MY OLD BELL-BOTTOMS AND TIE-DYED SHIRT!
I GUESS I SHOULD THROW THESE OUT!
SAVE THEM FOR ME!
5-3
DO YOU THINK THESE WILL COME BACK IN STYLE?
NAH, BUT I MIGHT NEED A HALLOWEEN COSTUME!
CHANCE BROWNE

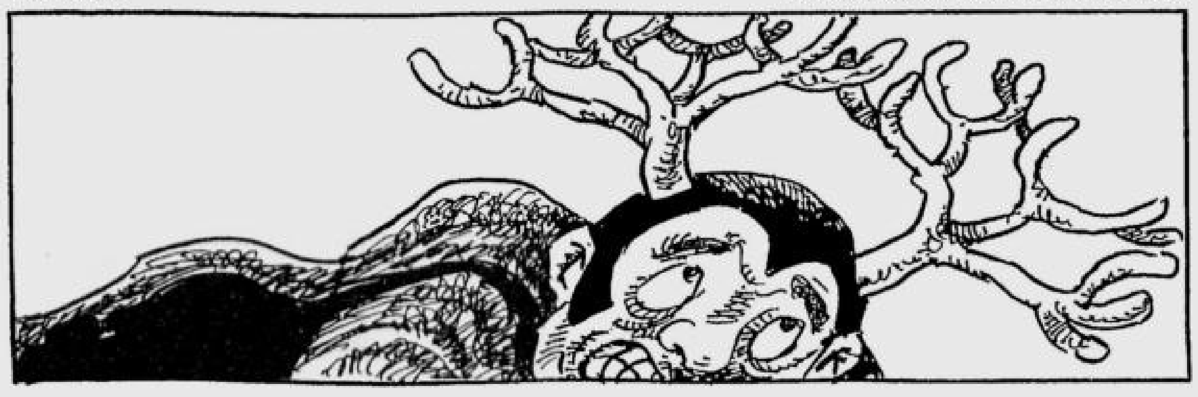
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


PUSA, NAKABILI SI MOMMY NG DIAPER KO NA GOOD FOR ONE DAY...
PARA HINDI NA DAW SIYA PALIT NG PALIT PAG WIWI KO!!!
ANO'NG KLASENG DIAPER 'YUN?!
ADULT DIAPER!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING



Affordable lauriat package at Citystate Hotel

INDULGE in authentic Chinese cuisine at its best at the Tower Seafood Restaurant of Citystate Tower Hotel. For a group of 10, have a delightful fill of your

DINING OUT

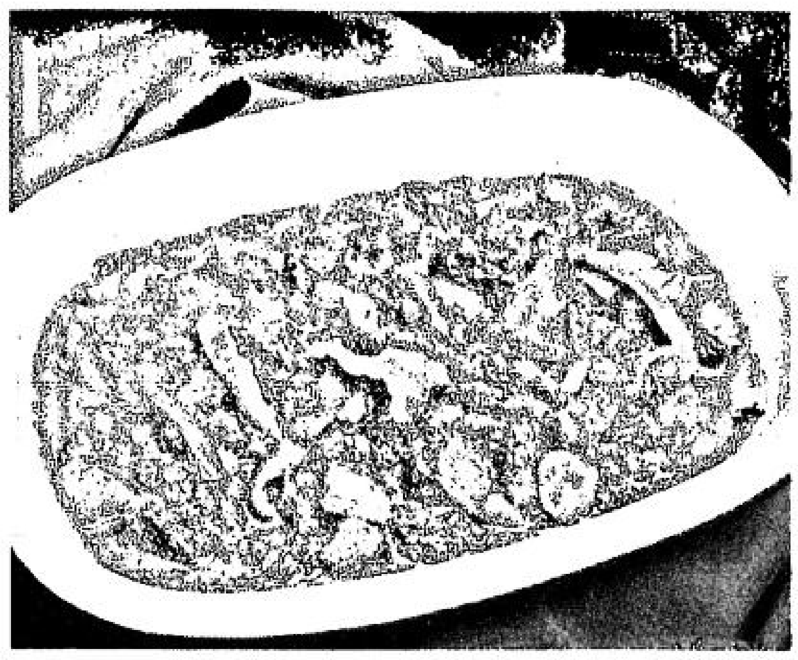
Chinese favorites for only P1,800. There are two selections to choose from: Sweet and Sour Pork with Pineapple, Special Soya Chicken, Stir-fried Green Vegetable and Sautéed Beancurd Szechuan Style; or Steamed Minced Pork, Squid with Tausi and Chili Sauce and Fish Fillet with Beancurd. Both selections come with Corn Soup, Pancit Canton, steamed rice and a dessert of fruits or Chinese *buchi*. Citystate Tower Hotel is located at 1315 A. Mabini St., Ermita, Manila. Call 400-7351 to 61.

DADS. The colors and tastes of the various Caribbean islands now come alive as Dads brings to the country a gourmet adventure like no other. Feast on new Caribbean dishes in their famous Eat-All-You-Can Buffet. Try the Caribbean Holiday Shrimp and Mexico's Caribbean Chicken. Dads has branches at SM Megamall, Glorietta III and Alabang Town Center.

ITALIANNI'S offers Filipino breakfast fare that includes Chicken Pork Adobo and Longganisa. Both are served with two eggs and garlic rice. *Daing Na Bangus* is served with marinated vegetables, two eggs and garlic rice. The restaurant gives its own twist to another Pinoy favorite with its Bisteca Italianni's. Still on the menu are breakfast items like the Great Italian Omelette, Italian Sausage Breakfast, Homemade Waffle, Eggs Benedict, Ciao Breakfast, Cereals, Fresh Fruit Bowl and Annie's French Toast. All breakfast choices come with either free refillable coffee or tea.

AFFORDABLE/ p.C7

CITYSTATE Tower Hotel's special lauriat package



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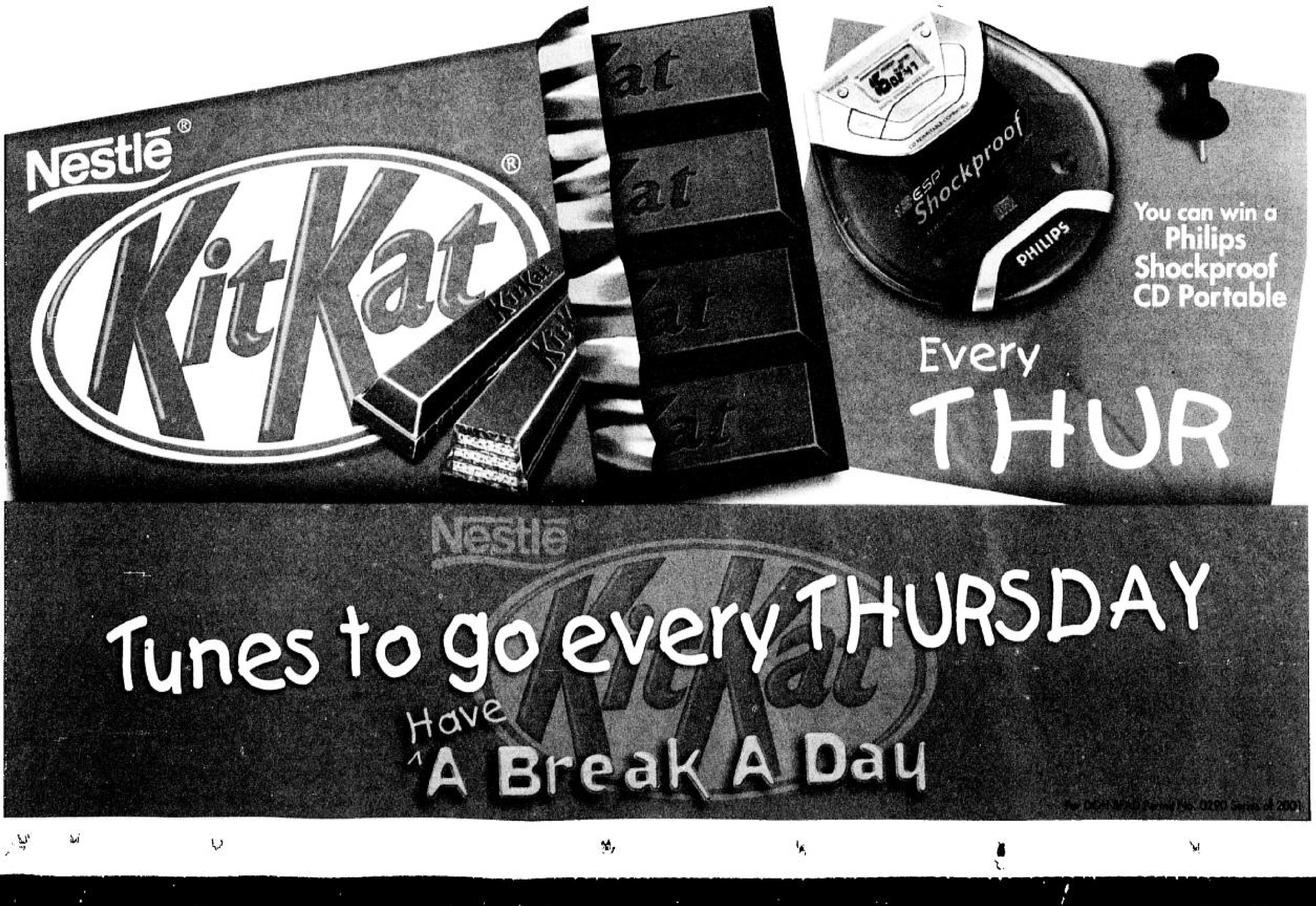
Sarap Pinoy Meals: July 7 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Guinataan Lumpia, Chicken ala Peking Duck, Itlog ng Pugo sa Dahon ng Gabi, Lechon Manok sa Kawali, Bangus Cordon Bleu, Seafood Kare-Kare, Rellenong Gulay, Inihaw na Tokwa. P750.
Kakanin: July 7 (Sat) 1:30 - 5 p.m. Kalamay na Pinipig, Bibingka Cassava, Tamales, Pichi-Pichi, Espasol, Tikoy. Special feature: Maya Puto & Bibingka, Salabat. P500.
Catering: July 14 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Portion control, costing, inventory, table layout, equipment sourcing with actual preparation of popular catering dishes featuring Filipino favorites such as Morcon, Galantina, Pork Asado, Soy Chicken, Roast Pork, Baked Macaroni, All-Meat Paella, 3 types of fried rice and special desserts P1,500.
Maya Quick & Easy Gulaman Delights: July 14 (Sat) 3-5 p.m. Cathedral Window, Coffee Jelly, Almond Jelly, Fruity Chewy Salad, 24 Hour Salad, Fresh Crab Salad, and Buko-Pandan. With food styling presentation. P350.
Chinese Cooking: July 21 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Kekiam, Nido Soup, Pata Tim, Fried and Steamed Siomai, Chinese Fresh Lumpia, Shanghai & Dumpling. P750.
Baking with Institutional Mixes: July 21 (Sat) 1:30-5 p.m. Assorted Brownies (Black Forest, Apple Chunk, Rocky Road), Pineapple Carrot Cake, Choco-Banana Loaf, Chocolate Crinkles. Includes lecture on cost profit analysis. P500
Pika-Pika: July 28 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Pinalutong na Kangkong, Crispy Dilis, Ukoy, Sizzling Fish Sisig, Pinaputok na Talaba, Chicken Feet, Kropeck. P500.
Panghimagas (Pinoy Desserts): July 28 (Sat) 1:30-5 p.m. No-bake Leche Flan, Halayang Ube, Yema, Pastillas de Leche, Pulboron, Macaroon, Buko Pie.

CERTIFICATE COURSES with hands-on:

Cooking II: (Comprehensive Cooking) For Career Cooks. July 3-6 or 17-20 (T-F) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Coverage: menu planning, international standard techniques of preparing stocks, soups, sauces, dressings, salads, main dishes, homemade cold cuts, etc. applicable to 1001 recipes including plate and platter presentation. Free lunch. P2,500
Basic Baking: July 4-6 or 18-20 (W-F) 1:30 - 5 p.m. Hands-on techniques in preparing basic pie crust, different types of cakes, quick bread, yeast breads and more. P2,000
Cooking I (Basic Cooking): For Messman, Stewards and Beginners. July 10-13 or 24-27 (T-F) 1:30-5 p.m. Basic food preparation, cooking methods for vegetables, pasta, meat and poultry dishes; Techniques of deboning chicken and fish; Basic garnishing. Table setting and napkin folding; Actual preparation of popular Filipino and Oriental dishes. P2,200
Basic Cake Decoration: July 21 & 28 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Lecture-workshop on fundamentals of cake decorating: coloring, designing, template, icing (boiled, butter, caramel, chocolate, sugar icing); basic borders, jelly lettering, basic flower making and bunching and motif. Free decorating tips. P2,000

EVENING SESSIONS: 5:45 - 8:45 P.M.
Bakery & Bakeshop Operations: July 24-26 (T-Th). Commercial methods used in preparing breads, pies and cakes including costing,production batching with actual hands-on P2000.
Integrated Workshop on Waitering & Bartending: July 24-26 (T-Th) Coverage: Creative techniques for efficient table setting and attractive arrangement, napkin folding and skirting; Suggested selling techniques, meeting, greeting and seating of guest; Use of magic words; Order taking; Table setting standards (American, Russian and French style); Setting up service station and checkpoint; Serving beverage and entree; Bartending basics; Cocktail mixing and garnish; and Personality Enhancement. P2,000.
Restaurant Operations: July24-26 (T-Th). Kitchen organization, cycle menu planning costing, cost control, purchasing, labor, payroll, inventory, etc. Proven techniques on profitable service operations with free snacks. P2,000

For reservations and inquiries, visit the Maya Kitchen at 8th floor, Liberty Building, A. Arnaiz Ave., (Pasay Road), Makati City or call tel. 892 1185 or 892 5011 loc. 108; or e-mail us at *mayakitchen@pacific.net.ph*



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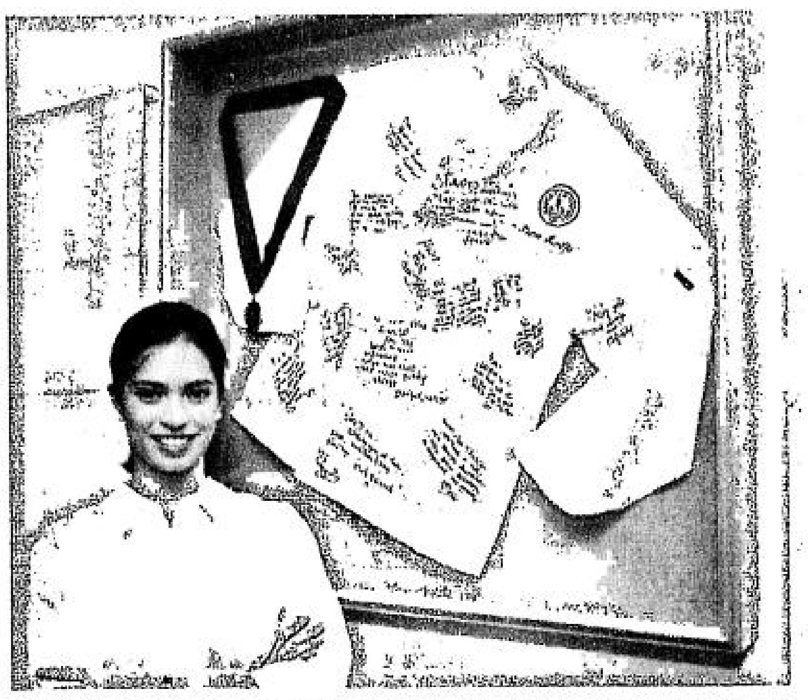


PIXIE Sevilla by her souvenir chef jacket from Culinary Institute of America

Forget these not

BY VANGIE BAGA-REYES
PHOTOS BY ROMY HOMILLADA

A SIGN that says "60" is the only indication that there is a bakeshop along Doña Juana Rodriquez, in New Manila, QC. For young chef Pixie Sevilla, the aqua-blue signage with dainty florets is her unique way of arousing the curiosity of motorists, and even nearby QC residents about what's "cooking" within the house.

No. 60 is the business address of Pixie's specialty bakeshop Forget Me Not (tel. 723-2776), which offers extraordinary cakes. Word has spread around about the goodness and distinctive tastes of Pixie's cakes that customers have been coming to this "hidden" source pleasure that's been named after Pixie's favorite flowers.

The interiors of the bakeshop are subdued. The decor is downright simple. Pixie's souvenir chef coats—from her years of study at the Culinary Institute of America in Napa Valley and the California Cooking Academy in San Francisco—are encased in big glass frames that adorn the yellow walls. There are only two tables and four chairs, but there is a big open chiller that showcases her specialties. The idea, of course, is to make the cakes the focus. Her cake creations emerge from the kitchen as colorful and elaborately composed works of art and they taste even better than they look.

Of course, you are not obliged to have a meal here. The desserts that look rich, creamy and devilish can either be eaten here accompanied with a cup of hot cappuccino or brought home sprightly packaged in blue boxes.

Pixie has been known for creating cakes you have never seen—or tasted—at your neighborhood bakeshop. Pixie Dust, a to-die-for triple chocolate cake with hazelnut, is a chocolate lover's dream. It is moist and thick with velvety chocolate. Princess Cake is a European ensemble made of marzipan and almond paste with cream filling. Pixie's version of cheesecake is heavy, dense, creamy and dreamy with a touch of lemon. Her eclairs are big and bulging with filling. Other specialty products include brazo de remedios, butter pound cake, panacotta, tiramisu, chocolate mousse, fruit-o-maki (a dessert sushi with heaping chocolate syrup) and biscocharitas (the stirring cookie for your coffee)that have five exciting flavors—anise aromatico (anise-flavored with almonds), choco hazelnut, La Bulakeña (coconut-flavored with cashew nuts), ginger spice (ginger-flavored with candied citrus) and caramel walnut.

Passion for baking

Twenty-six-year-old Pixie learned to cook, chop and mince at 10. Baking naturally followed. Maur Lichauco, a noted figure in the culinary scene and a good friend of Pixie's mom, encouraged her to go into baking and cooking. "I attended her baking classes every summer. She taught me the basics, as well as the complicated ones. She guided me all the way to my chosen career," says Pixie, who reminds one of movie actress Nanette Medved.

Although she finished communication arts in 1996, she pursued her dream to become a full-pledged gourmet chef. Prior to her foreign studies, she had a brief stint at the Peninsula Hotel as a trainee. In the US, she worked as a food stylist for a line of cookbooks and food catalogs.

Back in Manila, she made her "debut" by supplying cakes to different restaurants, among them the Blue Bacon. "I want to establish myself here while I'm still young," says Pixie, the only girl and the youngest in the brood of four.

TO-DIE-FOR Pixie Dust, a triple chocolate cake with hazelnut

HEAVY, dense and creamy cheesecake

PRINCESS Cake with cream filling

Forget Me Not will turn one next month. Putting up a restaurant, however, is not in her agenda. "Unlike other good chefs, I want to start small and concentrate on my cakes. I'm not ready for it. Right now, I enjoy supplying restaurants. At least, when people come here they'll know me for the food I make."

Greatest joy

Pixie's greatest joy is spending the day in her well-stocked kitchen with its big oven and shelves sagging under the weight of beautifully arranged jars of preserved fruits, bottled cherries and colorful cake decor items. It is a sight to gladden the heart of any home cook. Dominant figure in the spanking clean kitchen is Pixie's huge heavy-duty electric mixer, which her father gave to her as a birthday present. "It's as tall as I am. My dad asked me whether I wanted a mixer or a car. I chose the mixer." Good choice. The mixer has been of great value to her especially in baking big batches of goodies.

Pixie has been very busy supplying cakes for more specialty restaurants. These days, she's also been preoccupied with food consultancy for restaurants that need someone like her to develop their dessert line.

As one of Manila's most promising young chefs, Pixie is certain she'll make it big in this competitive food industry. "I'm confident that I'll survive in this business since you can't find the cakes I make anywhere else. I get more joy out of developing new things. My main goal is to come up with things that you don't normally find in other bakeshops."

E-mail the author at vbaga@inquirer.com.ph

It's Mardi Gras time

ROBUST "Louisiana food" is the focus of the latest food promotion, dubbed "A Taste of New Orleans," at TGIFriday's Glorietta, Ortigas, Robinsons Place Manila, Hotel Rembrandt, QC and Alabang Town Center until Aug. 31.

Bistro Holdings corporate chef Eya Marcelo, using recipes from Friday's International, says the new dishes feature a fusion of Oriental and South American tastes flavored with Cajun spice and Southern Comfort bourbon glaze.

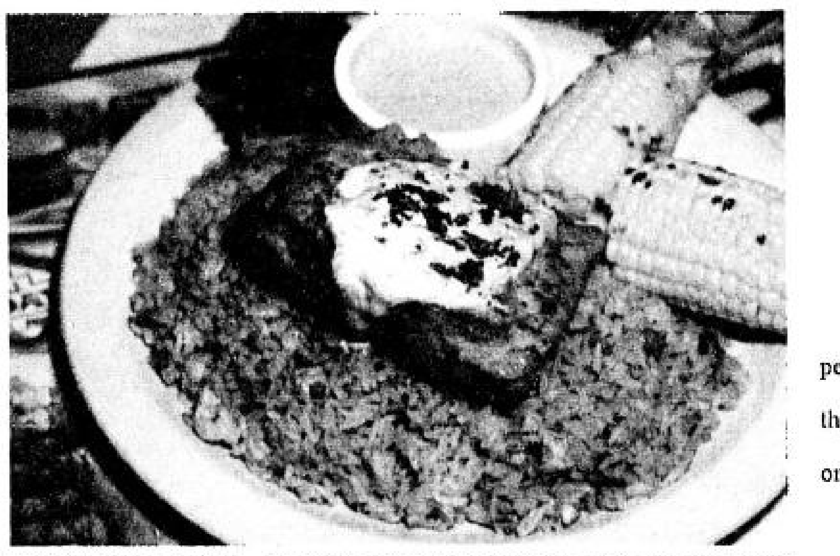
What is New Orleans cuisine without its signature Jambalaya? Friday's version is a succulent sauté of chicken and shrimp with red onions, carrots and red and green peppers served over tomato-infused Jambalaya rice.

Friday's borrows the term used for New Orleans' much-touted carnival season, the Mardi Gras, for its new dish—the Mardi Gras Catch. White fish fillet is Cajun-battered, sautéed and served over Jambalaya rice. Topped with Cajun cream sauce and with roasted corn on the side, the Mardi Gras Catch is truly an exciting culinary find.

Below, Chef Eya reveals T.G.I.Friday's secret to one of its best-selling New Orleans dishes, the Mardi Gras Catch.

Mardi Gras Catch

1 tbsp margarine, melted
170 gms white fish fillet
1 c milk
¼ c flour
1 tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper
¾ c Jambalaya rice *(see recipe for Jambalaya rice)*
Corn cob (1 per serving)
½ c Cajun cream sauce
1 tsp finely chopped cilantro
1 sprig parsley bouquet



MARDI Gras Catch—one of the featured in T.G.I. Friday's new food promotion "A Taste of New Orleans"

1. Heat saucepan over medium heat. Add margarine and heat in pan.
2. Dip fish fillet into milk—seasoned flour (mix flour with salt and pepper) Be sure to coat both sides of the fillet.
3. Once coated, place in saucepan.
4. Sauté until evenly browned, then flip fish fillet and sauté until evenly browned on the other side or until fully cooked.
5. Place Jambalaya rice on the plate and place fish on top of the rice.
6. Ladle Cajun cream sauce on top of the fish fillet.
7. Sprinkle chopped cilantro over fish fillet.
8. Garnish with parsley bouquet.

Cajun Cream Sauce

1 tbsp olive oil
2 tbsps red onions, diced
½ tbsp garlic, chopped
1 tbsp Southern Comfort
1 tbsp lime juice, fresh
Cajun seasoning *(see recipe for Jambalaya rice and use half)*
2 c heavy cream
¼ tsp pepper

1. Heat saucepan over medium heat.
2. Add oil, onions and garlic. Sauté until tender.
3. Add lime juice and Southern Comfort. Simmer until almost all the liquid has evaporated.
4. Add Cajun seasoning and heavy cream. Simmer.
5. Add salt and pepper. Simmer for five more minutes or until thick.

Jambalaya Rice

1/3 c olive oil
1 c bacon, chopped
2 c onions, diced
1 tsp garlic, chopped
¾ c celery, diced
½ c green pepper, diced
½ c red peppers, diced
170 g chicken breast, chopped

Cajun seasoning:
1 tsp cayenne pepper
2 tsps chili powder
2 tsps Spanish paprika
½ tsp each of white and black pepper
1 tsp each of oregano and thyme
2 tsps each of garlic and onion powder
3 tbsps salt
1 tbsp black pepper
2 c diced tomatoes
½ c tomato sauce
2 tbsps hot sauce
2 tbsps chicken base
2 c water
2 pcs bay leaf
2 c rice (uncooked)
4 tbsps cilantro, chopped
3 tbsps green onions, chopped

1. Heat pan over medium heat, add olive oil, then the bacon.
2. Once bacon is cooked, add onions and garlic and sauté until tender.
3. Add celery and bell peppers and sauté for 2 minutes. Add chicken pieces and mix well.
4. Add Cajun seasoning, salt and pepper. Mix well.
5. Add tomatoes and cook until chicken is done. Add tomato sauce, chicken base, water and bay leaf.
6. Bring to a boil. Add rice and return to a boil. Cover with foil. Place into oven (pre-heated at 350ºF.
7. Bake for 25 minutes. Remove from oven. Remove the bay leaves. Add cilantro and scallions. Mix well.

Gastro-trekking to Sicily and Lombardy

(From page C8)

soups, like cannellini bean soup with mussels and bacon; and the cream of leek and shrimps, balsamic infusion and fried leeks, were new to me, both hearty and tasting of home hearths rather than of restaurant kitchens. So were the Sicilian lentil, wheat and tomato soup; and the leek, potato and chickpea soup. All were interpretations of the landscape, home-grown and comfortable "Mamma Mia" soups, Ambeth Ocampo called them.

Chef Giuseppe, a Manila Pen resident chef, told us: "Don't choose from the menu; let me prepare something for you." In faith and with a thrill of suspense, we agreed, and tasted his homeland through his cooking.

A pizza to share as appetizer was Ala Turiddu, with mozzarella, tomato, spinach, bell peppers, olives and onions. Also his shrimp ravioli with anise and tomato sauce. On the Lombardian front we ventured through pastas like: tagliatelle with grouper ragout, capers and oregano; and eggplant and Scamorza cheese stuffed tortellini with tomato sauce.

The Sicilian tuna carpaccio had lemon, asparagus, fennel and Parmesan cheese. The stellar antipasto was the Lombardian deep-fried courgette flowers with herbed goat cheese and vegetable crudités in lemon oil vinaigrette. Ummm. Me courgette (zucchini) bases bloomed with herb-sprinkled goat cheese, and were surrounded by wafer-thin slices of zucchini and other vegetables.

Salads had their regional twists too: the Lombardia Autumn Salad with thin, silky slices of foie gras, figs, apples or raspberries and almonds; and the Sicilian Insalata alla Don Diego with arugula and romaine lettuce, artichokes, olives and a lime and virgin olive oil dressing.

The fish world was well served. Chef Genco brought forth Cernia Panata, a thick and succulent *lapu-lapu* fillet with lemon and virgin olive oil sauce. Chef Favio offered sea bass baked in foil, with clams *pepata* and soft polenta.

Lombardian meat dishes included "skewed" (according to the menu) pigeon with apple chutney, potato cake and grain mustard vinaigrette (its turned out to be four pigeon wings neither stewed nor askew, bet skewered); and roasted lamb rack on fava bean puree, Pecorino cheese and crisp bacon. Sicily offered Sasizza, lamb sausage with spinach and roasted potatoes; also beef roulade with cheese, almonds and raisins.

Chef Genco's choice of dessert for us was a hazelnut tart. There were as well Cassata Siciliana, and a savory assortment of Italian cheeses, from the mild mozzarella (from Campania and Lazio; made, like our *kesong puti*, from buffalo / carabao milk) to Pecorino Siciliano (sheep's milk), and the ripeness of Gorgonzola (Lombardy and Piedmont). A must from Lombardy is the Bitter Chocolate with rice soufflé (rice crisps), raspberry vinegar infused, and warm strawberry. A true must.

It was as if we had traveled to Sicily and Lombardy not only through films, novels and tours, but through the taste of their food, thus ethos, roots, history, air, land and waters.

Of exclusive villages and inclusive restaurants

THE MAD TEA PARTY

Clinton Palanca

SINCE I now have my apartment fully furnished, I have recently begun to entertain small groups of people, in both senses of the word, both to play host and to amuse (I have a friend who comes in and does headstands when the conversation begins to flag). I have liberally scattered impressive-looking books around the living room area (carefully creasing the spine beforehand to look as though I've actually read "Remembrance of Things Past" in the original French), bought all sorts of trendy CDs and swept my toenail clippings under the couch.

After everything is in place and all the food is ready, I usually retire into the study to surf the Internet while waiting for the guests to arrive (which is usually about 30 minutes after the stated time). When the guests arrive, two things invariably happen: they are attacked by my dog, and then they complain about how difficult it was to get upstairs. One of them was cross-interrogated at the front desk. Another was directed to another Mr. Palanca who lived in another building. Yet another was made to drive from one parking lot to another, ending up banging her car against the barrier post. I now try and arrange for a guest list and for parking, but in a way I am perversely pleased.

I've spent, you see, most of my life in a quiet residential area in Quezon City, where there are houses next to one another on streets, and all you have to do to get into the house is drive up and hoot your horn, or, if one is a guest, ring the bell. Yet more and more of my friends were living in "villages," where a guard stops you, asks you your name, the name of the person you're visiting, your purpose for visiting, your grandmother's maiden name, the size of your sister-in-law's footwear and whether you have seen a lost dog named Bantay. Having successfully passed this test, you then have to surrender your driver's license. Then, if you're picking someone up, you have to find the house, ring the bell, run past snarling dogs ("they don't bite," one is always assured, as their teeth snap inches away from your fingers), sit on the coucn and be served Tang with sugar in a glass atop a coaster. Oh, thank God for dating in the new millennium, when you can tell the girl to drive herself to the mall!

Stressful experience

My point, though, is that dropping in on someone shouldn't be a stressful experience. Dwellers in villages and residential buildings might want to note that hospitality begins not at one's front door, but at the village gate or concierge's desk. Among the villages, I would name Corinthian Gardens as having the rudest, surliest and most unreasonable guards. A close second is San Lorenzo Village, where they make you drive all the way down Pasay Road to the back entrance. Forbes Park, Dasmariñas Village and Bel-Air are fairly reasonable, but intransigent nevertheless. "But they're only doing their jobs," people always tell me. But I believe that it is a job that should not be done. Or, if it must, since we supposedly live in a country of thieves, it should be done with courtesy and grace. Stopping someone in this manner may be a necessary routine, but it is always insulting and demeaning to be treated as an outsider who may be up to no good. "Who goes there and what is your business?" is something that might have been heard in medieval times, outside the castle walls before the portcullis was raised, but it is a practice that should have been eradicated with the advent of modern urban society.

To rub salt into the wound, the village people have banded together to form a coalition: stickers from one plush village can get you into another. Non-village people have resorted to registering their cars as "company cars" with their friends, or forging stickers using Post-its and crayons. It's a waste of everyone's time, and money, and while we're at it, "villages" themselves are a silly, exclusivist and medieval concept. They cause traffic, create parochialism and, damn it, it takes time to reproduce those stickers, even with an Inkjet printer.

But then we live in a society that adores elitism; and the ones who adore elitism the most are the upper-middle-class. This is why there are fake "villages" out in the suburbs (Hey, we want to live in a village, too!).

We can do this by walling the place in, having a guardhouse made of bare concrete and a barrier of painted bamboo, and a single guard asleep on a chair, putting humps every 10 meters (I think they get the cement to make them by gouging out potholes in the road), and naming the streets after birds, flowers, trees, or dead American presidents! And when they finally make it big and move into Ayala Alabang, they will be the first to rave about how safe it is, how nice it is to walk about, and how difficult it is for their friends to visit them. (There are actually friends that I refuse to visit because they live in one of those abominable villages.) Villagism is elitism at its worst, and snobbery at its most obnoxious; and note that I often celebrate snobbery: but there are many forms of it.

Polar opposite

Perhaps this is why, despite a proliferation of household help to serve at table and wash dishes, most friends still choose to meet up at restaurants. There are many arguments, of course, about the origins of the restaurant, but the concept of a restaurant as we know it was born with the French Revolution of 1789. The cooks of kings, dukes and various beheaded nobility found themselves suddenly unemployed and decided to set up shops and cook for the public. Anyone who could pay could eat. For the first time, any commoner could sample the cuisine that had been created for royalty and nobility. Of course, it is argued that the great cuisines evolved from societies that had a royal court (France, China, Thailand, the Ottoman Empire, etc.), whereas Malakas and Maganda were busy chopping up wild boar and boiling them in blood or bile. But that's neither here nor there.

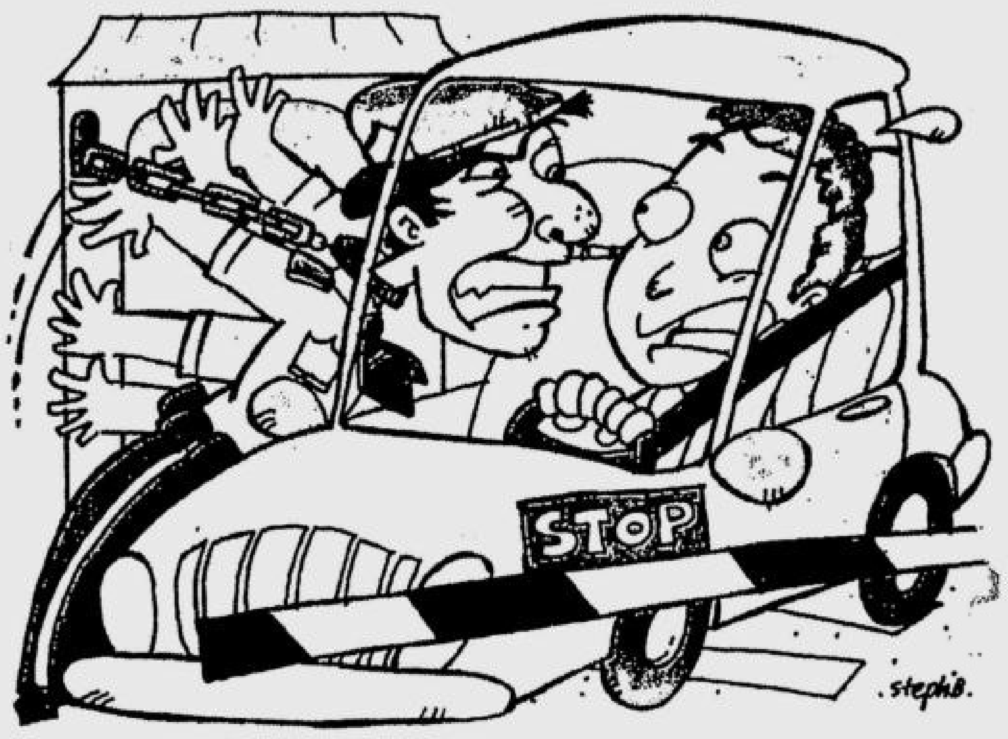
Now, however, we are a country that claims to value democracy, even if we merely use it as a convenient excuse for our poverty. The restaurant is a celebration of democracy, where Muslims sit with Christians, where the old aristocracy rubs elbows with the nouveau riche, where the man with the face that God made in his cubist period dines with the prettiest models. And they all eat the same food, or at least order from the same menu. There is no velvet rope or guest list for restaurants; maybe I'd have to wait six months longer for a table at Le Caprice than Kate Moss, but I'll get there in the end. For me, "Mr. Palanca, this way, please" is the sound of democracy ringing loud and clear.

Meanwhile, "What is your purpose here?" and "Are you expected?" are the croaking symptoms of a high society and its pretenders and hangers-on, those tedious beings who worship "brand-name" last names, and who would rather marry incestuously than have one's wealth dissipated to a commoner. The villages are "exclusive" in the etymological sense, in that they exclude, and thereby make their residents feel smug in the process of doing so; they make clear the division between an insider and an outsider, and the latter is correspondingly treated as an intruder. Its polar opposite is the restaurant.

Restaurants are inclusive: the maitre d' greets you with a smile, and as long as you are dressed properly, your entrance to an evening in soft lighting, sparkling silverware and plush carpets is assured. No one serves you Tang with sugar, and no one will make you use a coaster for your glass if you don't want to. We can raise a glass to democracy, and toast the beheading of those bullies who inhabit the guardhouses and the pretentious dolts who put them there.

E-mail the author at clinton@i-manila.com.ph

The elitism of guarded neighborhoods is the exact opposite of the celebration of democracy at dining places



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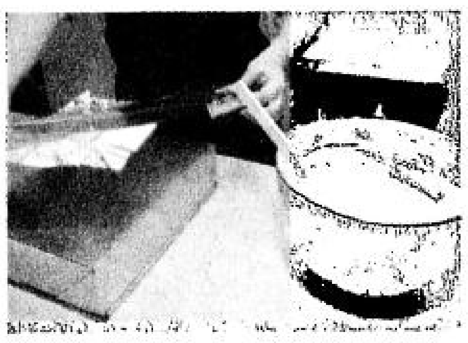
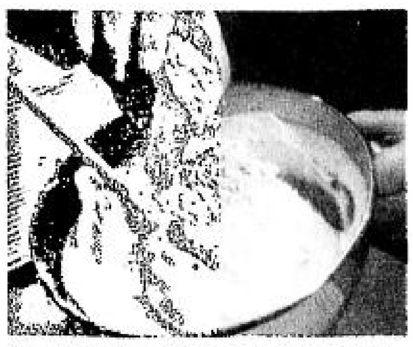
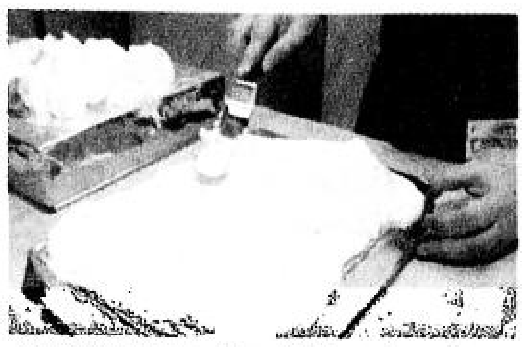


1 LINE the undersides of three rectangular baking pans, measuring 8"x12", with Glad aluminum foil, dull side up. Set aside.

2 TO PREPARE the meringue, beat the egg whites with the cream of tartar until frothy. Gradually add the sugar and continue to beat at medium speed until stiff but not dry.



3 USING a rubber scraper, fold in flour and cashew nuts.



4 SPREAD the mixture thinly and equally among the prepared baking pans. Spread as evenly as possible from end to end using an offset metal spatula.

5 BAKE in preheated oven (300°F) for 45 minutes to an hour or until golden brown.

Make your own Sans Rival

By Vangie Baga-Reyes
Photos by Johnny Villena

RICH, creamy, buttery, crunchy and nutty is how a real sans rival should be. The flavor of the filling and the crunchiness of the wafers make a perfect melt-in-your-mouth sans rival.

But before you salivate and dash off to the nearest bakeshop, why not learn to whip up you own sans rival? Don't let the idea of making one intimidate you. It isn't difficult to make; it only requires patience and ample kitchen space. According to culinary expert Dorothy Ferreria, "While it takes some time to make this recipe, it doesn't require a huge amount of skill." Dorothy shows us easy steps in preparing the meringue and the filling.

Before doing the meringue, preheat the oven to 300° F. Always use an electric stand mixer—never a hand mixer—in this preparation.

The meringue, which is basically made of egg whites, water, flour, cream of tartar, nuts and sugar, should be allowed to cool off in the oven after cooking to keep it crunchy. Don't ever leave it in a kitchen corner while preparing the filling because the wafer will turn tough instead of crispy. Remove the wafer from the oven one at a time when putting together the filling and wafer.

Timing is of the essence in preparing the buttercream. For instance, as soon as the syrup starts to boil, begin to beat the egg yolks and pour in the syrup to the yolks in thin stream while beating.

Dorothy adds rum to this recipe to balance the richness of the buttercream. You can also replace rum with coffee liqueur (Kahlua) which will slightly change the flavor and the overall character of the meringue torte. If using Kahlua, add two teaspoons of Nescafe instant coffee to the butter before creaming. You might also want to give a different flavor to sans rival by adding fresh mangoes to the egg yolk mixture.

Helpful hints: Sometimes the wafers come apart when removing from the foil. Just "glue" them back together by applying an adequate amount of buttercream onto the wafer.

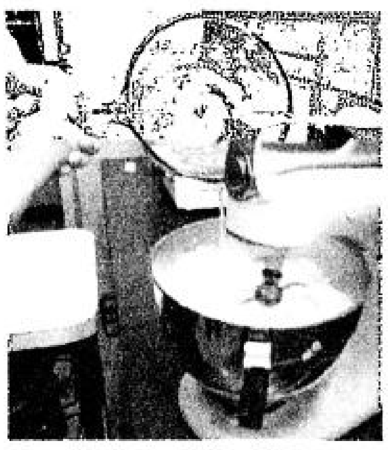
Total cost: P300. The same size would cost you double at your friendly neighborhood bakeshop.

Step by Step

6 ALLOW to cool completely in the oven but leave the oven door slightly ajar.

7 WHILE THE MERINGUE layers are in the oven, prepare the filling. Combine the water, sugar and cream of tartar in a thick saucepan (or Pyrex) and mix well.

8 COOK until the syrup spins a thread. Use a candy thermometer, if desired.

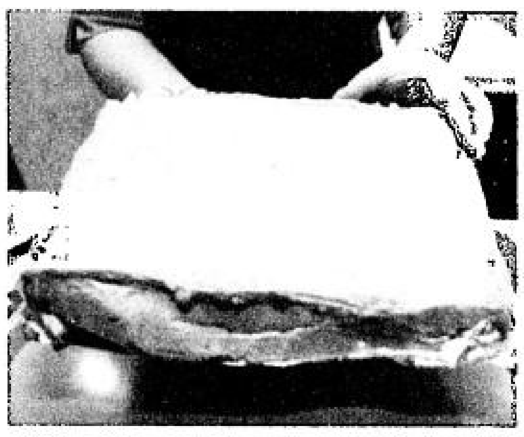


9 WHILE THE SUGAR is boiling, beat the egg yolks using an electric mixer at medium speed until egg yolks turn thick and lemon-colored. Add the syrup in thin streams to the beaten egg yolks while beating the mixture at high speed. Chill.

10 IN A LARGE mixing bowl and using an electric stand mixer with flat beater or paddle, cream the butter until light and fluffy.

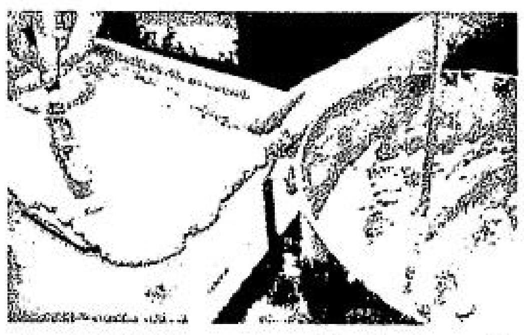
11 GRADUALLY add the cold egg yolk mixture to the butter while beating at medium speed. Wait for the butter to absorb the egg yolk mixture before adding the next spoonful or so.

12 BEAT in the rum. Set aside.

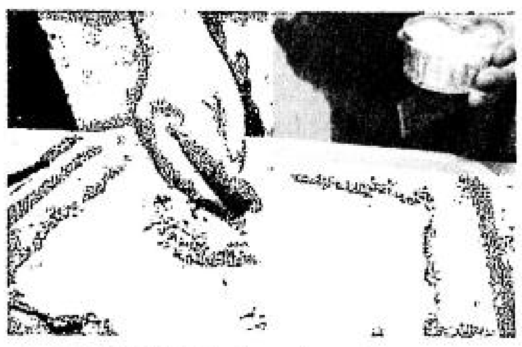


13 TO ASSEMBLE, place a layer of meringue on a serving plate.

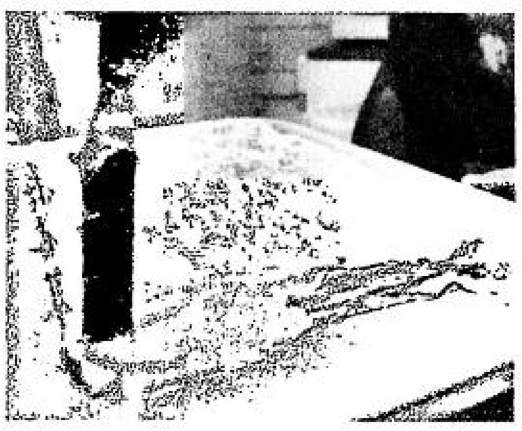
14 TO REMOVE the foil, loosen and slide wafers to a flat surface.



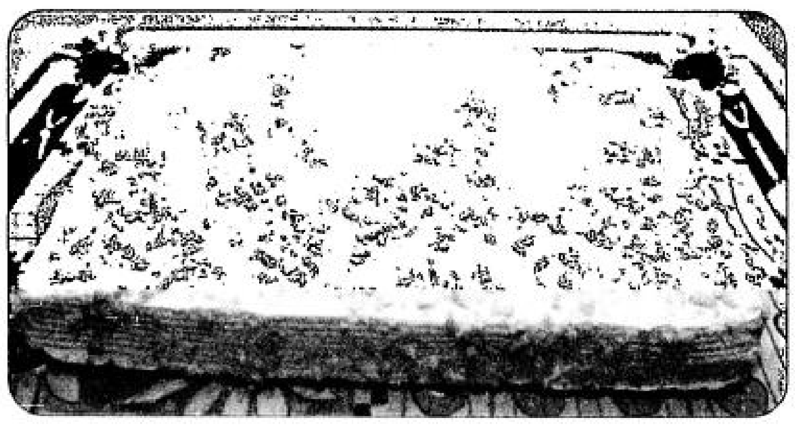
15 COVER the surface of the first layer with an adequate amount of buttercream.



16 SPRINKLE with cashew. Repeat the procedure with the remaining meringue.



17 USE the remaining buttercream to completely cover the top and sides of the assembled meringue torte. Garnish with more chopped nuts.



18 RUN a cake comb across the top and garnish with more nuts. Freeze to allow the buttercream to firm up. Keep frozen until serving time.

Ingredients:

Meringue layers:
1 c egg whites
¼ tsp cream of tartar
¾ c granulated white sugar
½ c sifted all-purpose flour
½ c chopped cashew nuts

French Buttercream:
½ c water
1 ½ c granulated white sugar
¼ tsp cream of tartar
8 egg yolks
1 ½ c Anchor Butter
2 tbsp dark rum

Garnishing:
Coarsely chopped cashew nuts

E-mail the author at vbaga@inquirer.com.ph

Japanese cuisine: Seasonal like the haiku

By Rowena C. Burgos

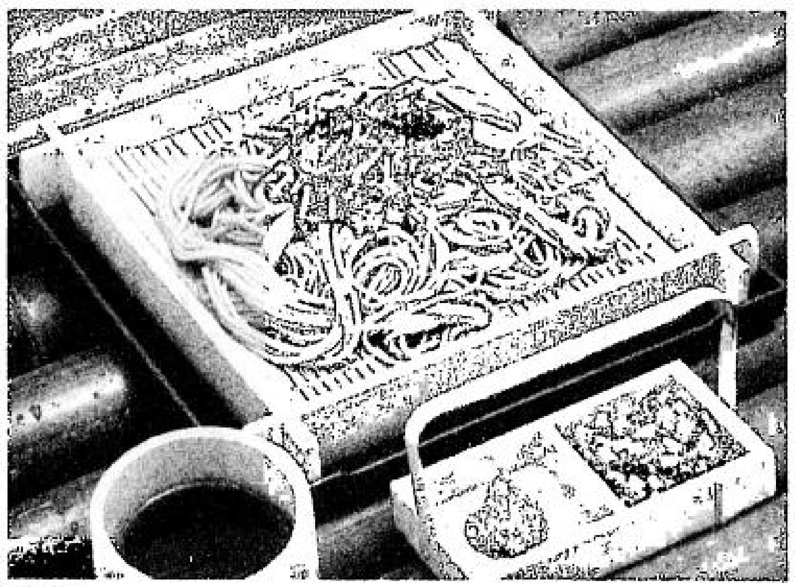
FOOD is one of the great pleasures of life in Japan. Not only has it developed one of the world's great cuisines, which offers palate-tickling sensations that range from the subtle joy of sashimi to the hearty basics of noodles, but some of the best chefs have come to the Land of the Rising Sun to cook for its discriminating gourmets.

The country's eating and drinking establishments present a cornucopia of flavors and textures. For non-Japanese speakers, most restaurants showcase plastic and wax replicas of their dishes on display windows. Just lead the waitress outside and point at your appetizing choice.

Once associated in the West either with sukiyaki or the more exotic sushi, Japanese food has, in recent years, been more appreciated for its varied flavors. Like the other cuisines, it has evolved from local traditions and foreign influences, particularly the Chinese who introduced the chopsticks, tea and soybeans. But it is distinguished by its aesthetic character, simplicity of taste and traditional ways of serving.

Its worldwide appeal is attributed to its natural flavor, being healthy and light and variety. The food utilizes fresh ingredients and is low in cholesterol for frying is limited to vegetable oil. A typical menu, which includes meat, seafoods and vegetables, makes for a balanced meal.

Traditional cooking methods



SOBA

THE AUTHOR (left) and Philippine Star's Tanya Lara attend a Japanese-style banquet dinner at Iwaso Ryokan in Miyajima Island.

Since Japan is agriculture-based and surrounded by bountiful seas, rice and fish are the country's principal foods. Rice is found in various forms in their meals. Flavored with vinegar, it's the basis for sushi. Donburi refers to meat, seafood or vegetable dishes served on a bowl over hot cooked rice. Gohan is steamed or boiled rice combined with other ingredients. Rice can also be cooked into soft gruel called okayu. When fermented, it's transformed into vinegar or wine. For dessert, there's mochigome or sticky rice, which is made into rice cakes.

Sukiyaki is prepared at the table by cooking thinly sliced beef together with various vegetables, tofu and vermicelli.

Tempura is food deep-fried in veggie oil, after being coated with a mixture of egg, water and wheat flour. The ingredients used are prawns, fish in season and vegetables.

Sushi is a small piece of raw seafood placed on a ball of rice with vinegar. The most common ingredients are tuna, squid and prawns. Cucumber, pickled radish and sweet egg omelette are also served.

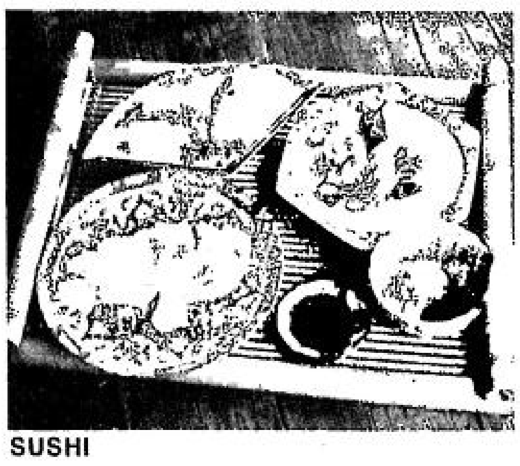
Sashimi is raw fish eaten with soy sauce.

Regarded as the most exquisite culinary refinement in Japan, Kaiseki Ryori's dishes are mainly composed of veggies and fish with seaweed and mushrooms as seasoning base and are characterized by their refined flavor.

Yakitori is a small piece of chicken meat, liver and vegetables skewered on a bamboo stick and grilled over fire.

Tonkatsu is deep-fried pork cutlet rolled in bread crumbs.

Shabu-shabu is tender, thin slices of beef held by chopsticks and swished in a pot of boiling water, then dipped in sauce.



SUSHI

Soba and udon are two kinds of Japanese noodle. Soba is made from buckwheat flour and udon from wheat flour. They're served either in broth or dipped in sauce available in delicious variations.

Seasonal

According to Mari Ueno, our travel guide in Japan during the one-week educational tour sponsored by Wakunaga of America and GNC Philippines, seasons of the year determine the dishes to be served and their style of presentation. The latter is an integral part of food preparation. Dishes should not just taste good; they must also look good.

During our stay, which was the onset of summer, we ate an abundance of cold noodles, fresh tofu in cold water and abalone sashimi. Dishes were served in glass bowls with ice, flowers and leaves.

Nuts, salmon, oysters and matsutake mushrooms are best in autumn. Fish is said to be the tastiest in this season up to winter.

While in Hiroshima, we were treated to a substantial meal of Okonomiyaki, the Japanese version of pizza. Cabbage, seafood, meat, eggs and soba or udon are piled on a thin plate-sized crepe made of flour and water and fried on a grill.

During winter, cooking at the table is common. Shabu-shabu, sukiyaki and hot noodles are the favorites. A delicacy at this time is the poison fish which, Ueno relates, is prepared by chefs who need to pass a government exam and obtain a special license to prepare such seafood.

Spring is the season for vegetables. Cherry blossoms are not only a feast for the eyes but also for the palate. They're sprinkled with salt and put in a pot of boiling water.

Kneeling or sitting on lotus position on a cushion throughout a meal might be a little uncomfortable but it was surely a new experience. Japanese table etiquette is unique. At an informal meal, dishes are placed at the center of a table and everyone reaches for the food with chopsticks. Individual trays for each guest are used at a formal dinner and the food is artistically arranged. Plates and bowls do not match. Each is admired for its individual beauty.

With Japanese cuisine usually served in charming settings and dining areas meticulously designed, eating in this foreign land is not only pleasing to the tongue but to the eyes as well.

E-mail the author at rburgos@inquirer.com.ph

Affordable lauriat package at Citystate Hotel

(From page C3)

HIGH TEA. Experience the afternoon favorite of the mid-1700s, High Tea at the Lobby Lounge of The Heritage Hotel Manila. While breezing through meetings or conversation, you can prepare your own flavored and fruit tea, stop by the "make-your-own-sandwich" station, try the wide variety of freshly baked French and Danish pastries or relish some well-loved Filipino fare. High Tea Buffet is available daily at the Restaurant Riviera's Lobby Lounge, 3-6 p.m.

AIOLI is the newest dining spot found at the G/F of Globe Telecoms Building on Pioneer Street, Mandaluyong City. Aioli serves dishes ranging from Western standards and exotic Oriental favorites. Aioli Crab Fingers, Katsudon, Ika Fry, Houston Special, Thai Satay, Peking Ribs are just a few of Aioli's specialties. It also serves desserts like crepes, cakes and specialty drinks. Call 687-4004.

OUTBACK. The Alaskan King Crabs are back on the Outback Restaurant menu. Imagine your Outback table being crowned with 1¼ pounds of huge crab legs. They're steamed au naturel and served with steamed veggies, Aussie chips, jacket potato or Rice Pilaf. Break a leg and dip its snow white meat in crab-butter sauce. Visit Outback branches in Glorietta IV in Makati City, Libis in QC and Alabang Town Center.

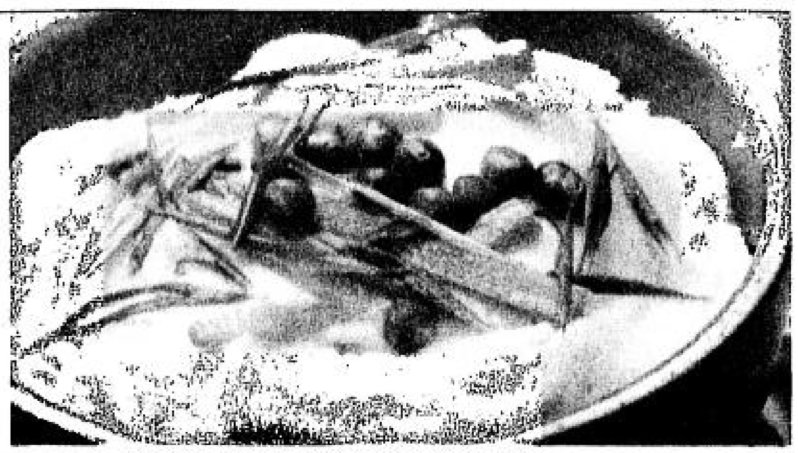
DUSIT HOTEL'S Benkay Restaurant will be featuring another specialty cuisine for lunch and dinner this month. Chef Yasuda has prepared an à la carte menu, which includes various preparations of the Red Mullet Fish. The Red Mullet is among the most prized saltwater fish by epicures. Some gourmets regard this as the "woodcock of the sea" since a fresh one can be eaten without removing its viscera. They are best from May to July when they are at their largest and their flesh is most flavorful and at its whitest. Try and enjoy the various preparations of this low- fat, low-calorie sea denizen. Choose from thinly sliced with ponzu sauce, steamed with Chinese wine sauce, sushi, or fried red mullets. Call 867-3333, local 3343 to 3345.

THE SOUP Kitchen at the Megastrip of SM Megamall is a place where you can experience original homemade soup and have a sample of more than 150 recipes of soup dishes, hot and cold. Some of the best-selling hot brews are the Chili Soup, Clam Chowder, Chicken Curry, and many more. In the cold soup's division, some of the bestsellers are Snow Crab, Apricot Melon, Banana Delight, Chilled Pacifce Cream, and many more. It also serves hearty sandwiches, zesty salads and freshly baked breads. For the sweet tooth, they have a wide array of desserts like the Coconut Green Pie, Mississippi Mud, Toffee Bars and many more. Call 633-6310.

28TH AVENUE DINERS. Greenhills denizens can now enjoy hearty breakfast meal and an unlimited serving of brewed coffee throughout the day at the recently opened 28th Avenue Diners on Ortigas corner Connecticut Avenue in San Juan. For as low as P59, diners can enjoy the restaurant's breakfast meals, which is a lineup of flavored pancakes and waffles topped with rich maple syrup; spiced French toast; array of delectable omelettes; and traditional Filipino breakfast meals—fried fish or meat and rice. The 28th Avenue Diners also offers lunch and dinner including baked salmon, grilled tender chops, fish fillets, baked chicken, turkey, steaks, seafoods, among many others. You can also enjoy a selection of vegetarian food, variety of thin crust pizzas, or a variety of pasta with a choice of al dente spaghetti or fusilli. Call 727-8203.

ROCKWELL CLUB RESTOS now offer "Tempting Traditions," a daily dose of specialized cuisine for members and guests. Fine dining restaurant Fernando's, casual dining outlet Palm Grove and outdoor bar and grill Blue Shade have lined up a week's worth of the best international menus.

LAS PAELLAS DE ALBA celebrates fourth year anniversary with a special offer of a free paella of your choice with every order of a crab dish. The anniversary promo is good until July 15. Las Paellas de Alba also has an extensive menu that boasts of the best in Castillian cuisine. There are classic dishes like the Callos Madrilena, Lengua Sevillana, Cochinillo de Alba. Also try the bite-size Spanish appetizers such as the *chorizo*, *jamon serrano*, *queso manchego*, *calamares* and *gambas*, among others. Las Paellas de Alba is located at Alabang Zapote Road in Alabang, Muntinlupa City (807-0352/850-8824) and in Tomas Morato, QC (371-4588).


AIOLI'S Katsudon, breaded porkloin with egg over rice

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Gastro-trekking to Sicily and Lombardy

CERNIA PANATA: Breaded Lapu-Lapu fillet with lemon and virgin olive oil sauce

IN GOOD TASTE

Doreen G. Fernandez

ITALIAN food is so pleasing to the Filipino palate that we find it in all levels of restaurants, as well as in homes, cafeterias and streets. The hotel outlets, however, with their visiting or resident chefs, have the facility to focus on different corners of Italian cuisine, and this they do in their festivals.

The Edsa Shangri-La's Paparazzi Restaurant (tel. 633-8888, local 12922, 12923; fax 631-1067), for example, recently presented guest chef Fabio Granata, who operates the 1-star Michelin restaurant Tre Gigli All' Incoronota de Lodi, and food from Lombardia.

Currently at the Manila Peninsula Hotel's Mi Piace (May to July) runs the Sicilian Food Festival featuring Sicily-born Chef Giuseppe Genco (tel. 887-2888, local 2497, 2982).

Italy, "which had been all of one piece in the Roman Empire, indeed the centerpiece thereof, led a fragmented existence from the early Middle Ages until the early 19th century, when under the auspices of Garibaldi it took its present political form. This fragmentation did not prevent it from being the cradle of the Renaissance in the arts, including the culinary ones. While the civilizations of France and Spain were still in bud, those of Italy (plural because of the numerous city states which shared the credit) were already flowering" (Davidson, 1999). Thus, although there are countrywide traditions like pasta, there are regional differences born of the crops, customs and tastes of the people.

"In Sicily, where the cuisine was renowned in the time of classical Greece and during the Roman Empire, there was a strong Arab influence in early medieval times, and this is still highly visible," writes Alan Davidson. "The market in Palermo, La Vucciria, displays many sweet items of Arab origin, using almonds and dried fruit; and... some of the kinds [of pasta] on display would have their origin in items introduced by the Arabs when they occupied the island from the 9th to 11th centuries. Sicilian savoury dishes often include tell-tale ingredients such as raisins, almonds again and so on."

CHEF Fabio Granata of Lombardy

Cannellini bean soup with mussels and bacon and the cream of leek and shrimps, balsamic infusion and fried leeks were both hearty and tasting of home hearths rather than of restaurant kitchens

Changes in the cuisine

Lombardy is in the north, where "the consumption of pasta was quite negligible until quite recent times," the preference being for polenta and risotto. Time has of course wrought changes in the cuisines, and so have globalization and inter-culturalization. The most pleasurable way to understand this is to savor the cuisine today in Manila or elsewhere.

But first a note on pasta: although some argue that all noodles started in China, Italians argue back that the Etruscans were eating *maccheroni,* for a long time the general term for any kind of pasta. "Macaroni's more recent history" began in Sicily, we read in "Culinaria, Vol. 2." "According to ancient documents, strips of pasta dough were drying in the sun as early as the 12th and 13th centuries... Today Sicily, Apulia and Calabria supply the majority of the sun-hungry grain."

The Lombardian

GASTRO-TREKKING/ p.C4

CHEF Giuseppe Genco of Sicily

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